

## Euro zone crisis—Morning Star warns of the 'germanisation' of Europe! Page 2



**Sarkozy to Cameron, "We are sick of you criticising us and telling us what to do. You say you hate the Euro and now you want to interfere in our meetings."**

### Contents

Page 2: Editorial: Euro zone crisis—Morning Star warns of the 'germanisation' of Europe!

Page 3: GRL Pages: London Busworkers under attack – Remove Unite RIO Wayne King By Gerry Downing.

Page 4: GRL "We are not dogs" petition and campaign, URGENT-PINHEIRINHO UNDER ATTACK

Page 5: Unite behind the sparks, Site Worker Report, Off with their heads (of agreement)!

Page 7: The 2011 Summer Riots: Engels, the English working class and the difference from the thirties By Celia Ralph.

Page 8: Leon Trotsky – As he should be known By Ret Marut.

Page 9: A meeting with a Friend of Israel By Therese Peters

Page 10: Two Salient points on the Libyan up-rising – in defence of vulnerable Libyans By Ella Downing.

Page 10: International relations established with comrades in Argentina and Sri Lanka.

Page 11: Defence of the Imperialist Nation State is a reactionary trap for the working class By AJ Byrne.

Page 13: The framing of Michael McKeivitt By Michael Holden.

Page 14: Defend Civil Liberties: Political Status for Irish Republican Prisoners, — IRPSG.

Page 15: Bloody Sunday March for Justice.

Page 16: Letter to The Kilkenny People by Charlie Walsh.

Page 17: Dale Farm Irish Travellers (Pavees) fight on By Tony Fox.

Page 18: We are not the 99% By Ella Downing.

Page 19: Engels "On Authority" By the Liga Comunista.

Page 21: On consensus: from Murray Bookchin's "What is Communalism? The Democratic Dimensions of Anarchism".

Page 22: Death of Kim Jong Il; Defend the North Korea.

Page 23: The Manifesto of the Luiza Mahim Collective (against special oppression) September 2007.

Page 24: CON 17 Won't Fool The Working Class! Revolutionary Marxist Group of South Africa.

Page 25: Must We Adore Vaclav Havel? From Michael Parenti's Blackshirts and Reds (1997).

Page 26: On the Continuity of Trotskyism, By Gerry Downing.

Page 31: The AIUF is the tactic, Permanent Revolution is the strategy By Ret Marut.

Page 36: Where We Stand – Socialist Fight EB

Socialist Fight is produced by the SF Editorial Board.  
Contact: PO Box 59188, London, NW2 9LJ, Socialist\_Fight@yahoo.co.uk

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the SF EB.

Unity is strength, L'union fait la force, Es la unidad fuerza, Η ενότητα είναι δύναμη, اتحاد قوت است, đoàn kết là sức mạnh, Jedność jest siła, ykseys on kesto, युनिटि श्रू-न।, Midnimo iyo waa awood, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, एकता शक्ति है, единство наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine, אחדות היא כוח, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A unidade é a força, eining er styrkur, De eenheid is de sterkte, الوحدة هو القوة, Ní neart go chur le céile, pagkakaisa ay kalakasan, jednota je síla, 일성은이다 힘힘, Workers of the World Unite!

## Euro zone crisis—Morning Star warns of the ‘germanisation’ of Europe!

### Editorial

**T**he crisis of the Euro zone is the latest and most threatening of the current crises of capitalism which opened up in 2008 with the subprime mortgage bubble collapse. Then the crisis was only put off by huge public subsidies to all the major banks to prevent their collapse. But the debt had to go somewhere and so the banking crisis became a Sovereign crisis. Now whole nations were threatened with bankruptcy and so are all the major banks again into the bargain.

This crisis brought about a huge scramble between the world's Imperialist powers to shift the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of their rivals. From a geo-political perspective the combination of the US, the UK and France embarked on a war on Libya to rob Libya's natural resources, to open her economy to the full force of neo-liberal finance capital exploitation.

But it was also a move against the threatening emergence of a rival Imperialist power bloc, The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in alliance with Germany and Italy swinging both ways, as in WW I and II. One of David Cameron's first acts as PM last May was to sign a military pact with France for the sharing of aircraft carriers etc. And a military alliance is a political alliance.

But these best laid plans may yet come unstuck. Because the British economy is more like the US economy than any other, it is enormously reliant on the City of London and managing the global exploitation of finance capital in alliance with the military power of the US. And France is in Europe far deeper than Britain; it is in the Euro zone. So it must defend that Euro at all costs or its collapse will cause unforeseeable calamities. And it is very difficult to see how the Euro zone can pay its debts.

According to The Guardian these amount to €8, 140, 289, 600, 000 or €24, 521.69 for each of the 332 million members of the EU, a stack of €500 euro notes 546, 806 miles high. That will take an awful lot of sweated labour to pay off; it represents savage exploitation of the European working class, savage despoliation of the semi-colonial world and WWII.

And then, on the night of the 8-9 December the unthinkable happened. David Cameron vetoed the EU treaty designed to solve the Euro crisis and was isolated 26 to 1 in Europe. The euro-sceptics were delighted, the 'business community' were deeply worried but Cameron had moved to protect the City of

London, highlighting once again the parasitic nature of British capitalism in the Global economy. There was even fantastic talk from the sceptics that the Empire had returned and now Britain could provide the financial services to the BRICS, that powerfully growing sector of the world economy!

But the Liberal Democrats were distraught as well they might, British industry could not survive outside of the EU and even the supposed gain of protection for the City was also illusory after closer scrutiny; the financial services tax would impinge severely on it regardless, many realised. Britain had ceased doing what was her historic policy in Europe since the Hundred Years War, playing one camp off against another and so dominating herself, she was now too weak to do so.

And the relationship with France was in a terrible state now Sarkozy had said to Cameron, "We are sick of you criticising us and telling us what to do. You say you hate the euro and now you want to interfere in our meetings." And it did not help with the relationship with the US either. Britain's special relationship with America was based on her ability to intervene in Europe to the advantage of the US. Germany was the winner in this first round but all was calculated without taking into account the European working class. Crucially how would its combativity affect this power struggle? Would it be able to fight its own corner as a global class?

To answer that we must discover how the trade union bureaucracies are reacting and to find this out we must look in the pages of the Communist Party of Britain's paper, the Morning Star. The Star had nothing to say on Monday apart from a letter extolling the difficulties and the good position Worker Liberty were taking.

But by Tuesday 13th Bob Crow spoke and the Star knew where it was going; with Cameron and the euro-sceptics. "It is no surprise 48 percent of the British people now support withdrawal with only 33% in favour of staying" opined Bob. The Star then quote Clacton Tory MP Douglas Carswell who "praised Cameron for putting the nation first" and followed this up with a call for a referendum.

And Communist Party general secretary Rob Griffiths said: "Cameron's stance is bound up entirely with defending the City of London against any new tax or regulatory regime, while Merkel wants to advance policies being



The knives are out! EU leaders at the crisis summit

dominated by the German banks". On Thursday 15th Brian Denny, of No2EU was warning of a "green light for Germany to impose a common EU austerity policy and deepen the germanisation (what a word, so redolent of British anti-German chauvinism!) of Europe" and finished up by demanding a "people's movement to resist corporate power by demanding the repudiating of the debts of the banks and a referendum on EU membership to regain democracy here and across Europe".

And on Friday 16 we were treated to Bob again demanding British jobs for British workers over the Bombardier Derby train contract: "ministers had no reason to carry on with a procurement process "loaded against Bombardier. Political inaction came together with EU diktat to deliver a hammer blow to train building in the nation that gave railways to the world".

Clearly the Star and Crow are arguing here what is in the best interests of the British "nation", i.e. They think they have a better plan to save capitalism, in this case sclerotic British Imperialism than Cameron. As we say on page 8 any Defence of the Imperialist Nation State is a reactionary trap for the working class:

*"So British workers should ally with one section of the British Imperialists (led by Clegg and Miliband) and place demands on another section (led by Cameron, who only sometimes gets things right, the 'quite rightly' above) to abandon the City and turn to manufacturing. And we will achieve this by appearing to be better organisers of British Imperialism than the current misguided Cameron, to know what is good for it and to offer it very sensible and constructive advice; "look if you want capitalism to work as we do, this is how you must do it".*

*"These wretched revolutionists, in a conflict with any serious enemy, think first of all of how to imitate him, how to repaint themselves in his colours, and how to win the masses by means of a smart trick and not by revolutionary struggle. A truly shameful posing of the question!"*

Leon Trotsky, Thälmann and the "People's Revolution", (April 1931)

## GRL Pages: London Busworkers under attack – Remove Unite RIO Wayne King

By Gerry Downing Secretary Grass Roots

### Class struggle

#### Busworkers need unity

**W**e are all aware of the attacks on London bus drivers' pay and conditions and on the fightback which has emerged. The sacking of Abdul Omer as convenor of Sovereign buses, with garages in Harrow and Edgware, in March 2010 was a central part of that attack. He lost his employment tribunal case in early November 2011.

The judge at the tribunal ruled that Unite regional industrial organiser (RIO) Wayne King was a liar and that on the balance of probability he must be lying on Omer's behalf. This cannot be true, since the relationship between the two of them broke down after King gave away everything that was won for the members. Omer told his supporters at the employment tribunal that King is indeed a consistent liar. But he is not his own liar: he is the company's liar. Omer promised to put out a statement on this, but he was taken to hospital the next day with a heart attack. He has only recently been able to return home, but he is still very ill.

Sovereign buses was the lowest paid in London when Omer became convenor and he negotiated parity with the parent company, London United, with its eight garages in Fulwell, Hounslow, Hounslow Heath, Shepherd's Bush, Stamford Brook, Park Royal, Tolworth and Twickenham. This parity deal amounted to a £4,000 pa increase over three years.

After his sacking and even before his appeal against it had been heard in April 2010, Wayne King had negotiated the annulment of that pay parity agreement, so Sovereign drivers are still the lowest paid, with the possible exception of those employed by Abellio. He gave away all the gains and he explained to the regional sector committee for the transport sector, of which Omer is an elected member, that Unite the union instead offered the company a self-funded pay rise (in fact it was a pay cut). Under pressure from Omer, King told the committee that Unite had felt it necessary to give back the gains won by the sacked convenor in consideration of the company's financial difficulties. No wonder the relation between the two broke down.

Meantime, the employers have pressed forward with their attacks on all fronts. Unite has refused to hold a strike ballot over the sacking of the convenor, despite workplace ballots and motions passed by the two garages supporting a strike. But the drivers have rebelled over the cancellation of their parity agreement, and Unite finally agreed to carry out a legal postal ballot for industrial action on the 2011 pay offer, al-

ready rejected twice in garage ballots.

#### Release the result

The result of the strike ballot on pay was due on December 27. Sovereign sought to circumvent this by approaching individual drivers with an offer to backdate the 2% deal (which included a no-strike clause) to July 2011, giving the drivers an average of £235 in time for Christmas. The company claimed "many drivers" had accepted.

New drivers in particular were given a raw deal with this offer. When Omer was convenor he negotiated a 14% increase and a reduction of the probationary period from one year to six months - again to bring Sovereign in line with London United. The 14% has now been withdrawn and the probationary period has been increased back to a year - with a new two-years grade to be introduced from December 2012.

Thanks to King and his concern for Sovereign's interests, conditions are now worse for drivers than when Omer became convenor three years ago. The RIO is giving away every one of the substantial gains that Omer had won for his members - driving the last nail in the coffin of the parity agreement.

Omer has urged the drivers to resist and a mass meeting was called in the middle of December. Unexpectedly King turned up - as one driver put it, he "came from nowhere to take the fight out of the members and manage it". King kept the meeting waiting for 50 minutes while he negotiated with the managers. The drivers had already begun dispersing when he returned to tell them that, as a "large number" of drivers had signed the no-strike deal, the result of the Electoral Reform Society's ballot would therefore be invalid. Uproar ensued. Members shouted at him that Unite was a management outfit, and there were calls for everyone to leave the union. King left the meeting to more abuse. Petitions then began circulating in the two garages, demanding, amongst other things, the resignation of the two reps.

#### Remove Wayne King

Wayne King should be dismissed as Unite RIO in view of his disgraceful behaviour. Apart from the fact that a contract containing a no-strike clause is void, as it is illegal and cannot be enforced, the company is not entitled to pay the drivers who have signed one rate and those who have not signed another for the same work (neither King nor Sovereign has come up with any figures to back up their claims of a "large number").

Since when do trade unions promote individual deals on pay and conditions? King's behaviour was in sharp contrast to the position taken by Jim Buckley, another Unite RIO, who had put a stop to this underhand tactic in 2008, correctly observing that it amounted to derecognition of

the union. The company was forced to back down on that occasion and the revolt of the drivers now has had that same effect: Sovereign has written to all drivers saying the company accepts collective bargaining and working with the trade union. It has proposed a two-year deal of 3.1% from December 2012, but this would not apply to rest days or overtime rates, which remain the same. Of course, this is still below the rate of inflation and so should be rejected by the drivers; the demand must remain parity with London United.

Wayne King and the new acting convenor, Jamil Abbasi, have pressed ahead with this new offer, refusing still to reveal the result of the strike ballot. They hope to push the deal through in separate garage ballots after meetings.

#### Grass Roots Left says,

Sovereign drivers can still win by taking the following urgent action:

Don't leave Unite - stay in the union to fight the sell-out misleaders and reinstate Abdul Omer.

Convene meetings in Edgware and Harrow, and pass a resolution saying that drivers do not accept the pay deal and will fight on for both the full claim and brother Omer's reinstatement. Reject the pay offer - parity with London United.

Renounce the company for intimidating individual drivers into signing up to an invalid deal. Organise petitions.

Demand that Wayne King should answer for his actions and be removed from his union position.

Demand that Unite releases the result of the ballot and convenes a meeting of members - including those who may have temporarily left in disgust - to ask them what they would like to do.

Be prepared to consider coordinated strike action across the bus companies in the future to stop the 'race to the bottom'.

All London busworkers should unite around these demands:

Peg wage settlements to the rate of inflation.

One wage rate and one set of conditions throughout London.

End competitive tendering.

Renationalise the buses.

Build the Grass Roots Left in every garage to oust the corrupt, sell-out union bureaucrats.

For more information and to assist the Sovereign campaign contact sacked convenor Abdul Omer Mohsin: 07830 424395; omermohsin2@yahoo.co.uk

#### Stop Press: Ballot 13 Jan on pay at Sovereign

The company offer is rejected by 105 votes against 15.

Harrow 50 No --- 6 Yes

Edgware 65 No --- 15 Yes.



## GRL Launches the "We are not dogs" petition and campaign for proper toilet and mess room facilities for bus drivers at Brent Cross

The "We are not Dogs" Campaign has organised a petition and a lobby of London Mayor Boris Johnson on 17th January Metropolitan Police training college, the Peel Centre, Aerodrome Road, 7pm - 8.30 pm. Doors open at 6pm. against the closure of the Brent Cross toilet and for decent toilet and mess room facilities for the bus drivers at which we aim to present out petition. The "we are nor dogs" name came from the headline in the Hendon Times who reported the Campaign back in December and used a driver's observation.

For years now Transport for London has treated Brent Cross drivers like dogs. They close the only toilet the male and female drivers have at the slightest excuse and force both sexes to use the bushes near the Brent River to relieve themselves when the Centre is closed. A driver was fined £80 for this last year at the Spires in Barnet because he had to use the bushes.

TfL are threatening to close it permanently

unless "we" stop misusing it – just because some unknown person, driver, member of the public or even a TfL official has carved swastikas on the wall we are "all" not responsible enough to be given this basic human right! The toilets have been fully functional during all this time, only closed to "teach you a lesson" as one official put it.

We demand:

1. The toilet be opened immediately and kept open while it is functional.
2. The present unventilated fly infested broom cupboard "mess room" is converted into expanded toilet facilities, properly ventilated and available at all times for the drivers.
3. A Muslim shower and prayer area. As the Qur'an advises Muslims to uphold high standards of physical hygiene and to be ritually clean whenever possible, bathrooms should be equipped with a Muslim shower situated next to the toilet, so that individuals may wash



Navin Shah, Grater London Authority member for Brent and Harrow, signing the petition at Brent Cross. Another signatory is former Mayor Ken Livingstone who is standing for office again on 3 May 2012.

themselves. This ablution is required in order to maintain ritual cleanliness.

4. Proper mess room facilities for the 70 odd drivers who have to take their meal breaks at Brent Cross, either a room within the Centre or a portacabin with drinks machine, television and rest facilities. We cannot wait for 5 or 7 years for the new Centre, as they tell us, only to be put in another broom cupboard.

## URGENT-PINHEIRINHO UNDER ATTACK

Pinheirinho was occupied eight years ago and belongs to the estate of Selecta S / A, owned by financial speculator Naji Nahas. Before being occupied, it was a land that was abandoned for 30 years, with over 1 million square meters. The estate of Selecta has a debt of more than \$ 15 million in taxes to the municipality of Sao Jose dos Campos. <http://en.squat.net/2012/01/17/pinheirinho-occupation-sao-paulo-resisting-eviction-now/>

region.

- For the release of all political prisoners!
- For the right of homeless workers to return to the land they occupied and they are granted these by the expropriation without a compensation of the interests of real estate speculators!
- In defence of the repressed inhabitants Pinheirinho!
- For a public works plan controlled by the unions to ensure decent sanitation facilities for the entire working population!
- Against the murderous regime of Dilma \*\* - an accomplice to the slaughter - Alckmin and Cury \*\*\* - their commander!
- Pinheirinho belongs to the working population!
- \* Conlutas is a left trade union federation, (called the and Popular Central Trade Union - Conlutas) which controls 80 unions
- \*\* Dilma Rousseff, PT leader and current President of Brazil
- \*\*\* Governor Geraldo Alckmin, command of the Military Police of São Paulo, Eduardo Cury, Mayor of São José dos Campos.

Sunday, 22 January, 2012 14:41

The Military police are carrying out a massacre at Pinheirinho moment!

There are many wounded. These coward were ordered by PSDB of Alckmin and Eduardo Cury, Governor of São Paulo and Mayor of São José dos Campos, respectively, against the poor population.

Even under a vast disproportion of forces, local sources say that the squatters are resisting with



Squatters in Pinheirinho, in the very wealthy municipality of Sao Jose dos Campos, Brazil, prepare to resist. As of Sunday 22 reports are of a major assault by the military police and several dead.

stones and sticks and barricades of burned tires. Entry to the site of the occupation was blocked by the MP, there are several arrests, many wounded (including pregnant women and children), and already we have reports of a massacre: 7 deaths so far. They have just cut telephone and internet signal in the area.

At the moment Pinheirinho needs every support and solidarity of the workers' and popular movement to resist. Orient all fighters in solidarity with this struggle who go wisely to the site to help neighbours in whatever it takes and denounce this massacre as widely as possible.

Sunday, January 22, 2012 02:00

On Sunday, around 6 am, without notice, the Military Police and its shock troops attacked the Pinheirinho community, an operation for the orderly evacuation of the neighbourhood against the approximately

## Statement by the LCFI

### Stop the slaughter in Pinherinho!

That Conlutas \* organise a United political strike against this savage repression!

The inhabitants of the Pinheirinho squat, the largest urban squat in Latin America, are currently subject to brutal repression by the capitalist state. This repression is in the service of the interests of real estate speculation. This speculation comes from financial capital. It is the duty of all who claim to be popular fighters for the unconditional defence of the inhabitants of the squat against this savage repression.

We denounce the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state and top judiciary as class enemies without fostering any illusions in them in order to prepare the inhabitants for their attacks. We demand that Conlutas, who heads the powerful metalworkers union in São José dos Campos (with workers at General Motors), coordinate with unions like chemicals (Johnson & Johnson) in a united political strike in the

Continued on page 6

# Unite behind the sparks

Engineering, craft and labourers must find common cause, urges Gerry Downing

## Need for widest solidarity

On August 13, 500 electricians, pipefitters and supporters packed into London's Conway Hall to launch the struggle against wage cuts and repudiation of national agreements by eight of the main building employers. The eight were Balfour Beatty, NG Bailey, Crown House, Gratte Brothers, MJN Colston Ltd, Spie Matthew Hall, Shepherd Engineering Services and T Clarke plc, but Colston has since pulled out of the offensive.

The companies want to impose three new grades for electricians: metalworking (£10.50 per hour), wiring (£12) and terminating (£14). At the moment the Joint Industry Board (JIB) rate for all electricians is £16.25 across the board. Wages in the building industry are set by annual agreements between the unions (Unite, Ucat and the GMB) and the JIB - in this case the Heating and Ventilation Contractors Association (HVCA).

The initiative for the August 13 meeting was taken by rank-and-file activists within the London Construction and south coast branches of Unite. It was inspired by the success of the Grass Roots Left movement, which came out of Jerry Hicks' rank-and-file challenge for Unite general secretary last year. Hicks was on the platform of the meeting, spoke inspiringly (chants of "Jerry, Jerry, Jerry") and was unanimously elected to the Rank and File Committee (alongside two electricians, two pipefitters and one for the civil) set up to pursue the struggle, although he does not work in the industry himself. His principle of mobilising the ranks against a recalcitrant Unite bureaucracy and calling for strikes and walk-outs independently of the union bureaucrats whilst pressurising for strike ballots was clearly inspiring to the mass of the meeting, many of whom spoke with anger and bitterness at the treachery of the bureaucracy in the past.

Two Unite officials were on the platform and their equivocations and backsliding speeches were vigorously attacked by several speakers. They had a few supporters only, whom the chair had to defend against the obvious anger and militancy of the meeting.

The mobilisation of the masses independently of the Unite bureaucracy forced the union to act, but with extreme reluctance. Unite national officer for construction Bernard McAulay was forced to apologise for a leaked email calling the Rank and File Committee a "cancerous group". One 'Brian the Dog' posted a vitriolic attack on the Socialist Unity blog: "Jerry Hicks, who does not work, let alone work in the construction industry, has in a blatant act of opportunism and ultra-leftism somehow managed to get himself elected onto a rank and file construction workers committee" (October 15). That "somehow" might have been by unanimous acclaim!

Then the real problem emerges: "Hicks and his usual groupies need to be exposed for the hijacking of what is an extremely important dispute. This is all about positioning himself for being third time lucky for what he believes is his birthright - general secretary. Also once again we see him and his groupies attacking full-time officials ... The problem is that a leopard doesn't change its spots!"

So the problem is not just Hicks and the Rank and File Committee or even the dreaded "groupies", but the fact that walkouts and independent mobilisations have seen the dispute slip out of the hands of the bureaucrats and "hijacked" by the ranks - an appalling vista for any true bureaucrat. And there is a real danger that a leadership is emerging for a permanent rank-and-file group along the lines of the Grass Roots Left in the construction industry, where it is so sorely needed. And another 'groupie' of the dispute is Brain Higgins, who provides what assistance he can in producing the literature along the lines of the *Building Worker*, that scourge of the Ucat bureaucracy in the past.

The mobilisations have been nationwide and impressive, covering London, Manchester, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow and elsewhere. On November 9 demonstrating construction workers were disgracefully kettled by police to prevent them joining up with the student protest in London.

Unite commenced balloting the largest firm, Balfour Beatty, on November 16 and the deadline for the 'sign or be sacked' ultimatum to the 1,000 sparks is December 7. The ballot closes on Tuesday November 29 - surely timed to avoid any possibility of coordinating the electricians' action with the November 30 mass strike day across the public sector. But the Rank and File Committee has put out some excellent propaganda urging a walkout from that day, so the official Unite plan might well backfire.

Of course, rank and file committees are needed at every site. But winning this dispute needs a bit more than that. It needs an orientation to the entire labour force on site. And the vast majority of these are immigrant labourers, super-exploited and treated like the very scum of the earth. Some 20 years ago east European, mainly Kosovan, labourers replaced the Irish on the Cricklewood Broadway and other such hiring fairs nationwide. According to a 2006 report for Ucat, *The evasion economy* by Mark Harvey and Felix Behling, false self-employment in the British building industry is almost three times worse than any other advanced country, including the notorious US construction industry. Employers escape all their social responsibilities in this imposed health and safety nightmare, where the minimum wage is totally ignored. Workers, often recruited in eastern Europe, believe they have no option but to accept such conditions. The



government turns a blind eye in order to help their friends in the industry who contribute so generously to Tory Party coffers.

Another Ucat report, *The hidden workforce building Britain*, speaks of "working in slavery-like conditions, workers waiting in car parks to be hired and being paid cash in hand at rates below the minimum wage" and further details the "dangerous and unregulated nature of such work". The report was welcomed by George Guy, Ucat's acting general secretary, who pointed out that "workers in the construction industry have lower levels of protection than workers in sectors covered by the Gangmasters Licensing Agency (GLA)".

The report calls for "a single, independent labour inspectorate, which would be based on the model already created by the GLA and would cover all industrial sectors". It argues that this "beefed-up body" should have "sufficient resources to dramatically increase its levels of proactive inspections in order to ensure that there is a major crackdown on exploitative employers".

Surely the Sparks' Rank and File Committee can come up with something far better than this to attract the support of these workers. They should champion their cause by demanding direct employment, which would ensure full sick and holiday pay, pension provision and proper health and safety standards as the only way to organise the whole site. The corrupt Unite/Ucat/GMB practice of appointing convenors at the start of the job (the Olympics site being a prime example) must be fought against and stopped. Often the shop steward is hired by the site agent on a manager's wage, the union immediately recognises his bone fides and he then polices the site on behalf of management to make sure it is *not* organised. Horror stories of legitimate safety complaints being met with threats of violence by these management-union thugs are legion. The failure to organise the Olympic site in any proper fashion needs to be examined.

In this author's view a grievous blow was struck against an already reeling workers' organisation on the sites by the 'British jobs for British workers' dispute, where craft unionism began to dominate and foreign workers were disgracefully portrayed by the likes of Amicus/Unite general secretary Derek Simpson in alliance with the *Daily Star* as the main enemy. No dispute ever received more support from the gutter press and, whilst socialists managed to fend off the advances of the far right, nonetheless the dis-

graceful picture of Simpson in the *Daily Star* fronting its campaign - alongside two models, adding insult to women to the injury to foreign workers - has set the movement back considerably.

Let us champion the cause of the chippies and bricklayers and the builders' labourers and begin to unite the class again. This dispute links up with two other campaigns that were already seeking to turn the tide - the Blacklist Support Campaign and Justice for Shrewsbury Pickets. Blacklist Support has had some success - exposure of the blacklist, campaigning for victimised construction workers Dave Smith and Frank Morris and some employment tribunal victories.

## **Tuesday, 17 January 2012, Latest Rank and File Newsletter**

### **Our message to Unite 'Get the ballot right this time'!**

Unite have announced a new ballot timetable of BBES. Ballot papers should be going out in the coming days. The result should be known by 2nd February, then Unite by law [anti-union!] has to give 7 days' notice before any strike action can begin, that would bring us up to 9th February.

We have no doubt that it will be a resounding YES vote again maybe with an even bigger majority than the last time. All being well [get it right eh!] we will be on strike this time with no challenges from Balfours. However, Unite will not be balloting NGB or SPIE Mathew, they say that we "have not enough members yet" How can this be? What have the officials been doing for the last 6 months? Get your finger out and recruit!

Even so on February 9th we should be seeing strike action at BBES, that being the case, we must hit every Balfour site in the country no matter how big or small, even if they have no workers directly employed—they love an agency do Balfours! Unite must give full backing to the 'rank and file' by providing us with buses to ferry pickets around, seeing as Unite have members who are bus drivers we can't go wrong!

A strike fund must be set up as well as supplying us with 'flags' 'banners' and 'placards'. Every single construction officer should be on standby for picketing, get your donkey jackets out of the cupboard, even a few oil drums, and get the fires going, set up proper picket lines. United as one to defeat the BESNA 7! If things kick off with BBES in February, no doubt other sites will support the BBES strike, and walkout in solidarity with their brothers. We need to and can escalate the strike to a national stoppage.

Last Saturday 14th there was a national 'Rank and File' meeting in Birmingham, with more than 80 in attendance, including sparks from, Scotland, London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Newcastle. Gail Cartmail Unite AGS [appointed] gave an update on the dispute, the ballot, and plans for the future. A proposal was put to Cartmail by the meeting for an ELECTED rank and File member to be taken on by Unite' in every region as organisers for the dispute.

The aim would be for them to visit sites informing workers about the dispute, and recruiting as many new members as possible. There are some brilliant ex shop stewards activists who are blacklisted and unemployed who we know would do a fantastic job for Unite. Cartmail agreed that she would put the proposal to the general secretary Len McCluskey.

We need to build up numbers on all the protests so spread the word, don't sit indoors expecting others to fight the fight, we owe it to our class, our children and grandchildren. The rogue 7 are determined to get this BENS through, we must be even more determined and resolute to force the contract where the sun don't shine. And then sort out the whole JIB agreement by starting afresh. And perhaps getting a national rate across the country for all sparks no more 'London waiting' or 'country rates' how about £25 an hour as a starting point. We should push for elected 'Rank and File' members to be part of a negotiating team and then a vote on a new deal. No more sweetheart deals thank-you-very-much!

## **Off with their heads (of agreement)!**

As you will be aware the trade union leaders are busy trying to sell out the public sector pensions struggle. Although Unite's rejection of the deal has made it harder for UNISON and others to agree to the deal and call off further action, it's still necessary to build the campaign against the sell out as a way of developing rank and file organisation in the unions. The rest of the Left has failed spectacularly to rise to the challenge, calling two separate meetings to coordinate resistance to the sell out, neither of which will probably be democratic (PCS Let Unity Conference 7th Jan, Unite The Resistance 14th Jan).

Workers Power are proposing that GRL initiate, along with any interested parties, a rank and file trade union conference against the sell out, and we will circulate a leaflet at the PCS conference, and the UTR conference the weekend after to publicise this. No concrete plans/details exist yet

for the conference (and the initiative is open to all), but we want to publicise the need for one, and that the GRL wants to help organise one, to the many militants who will attend these conferences and be disappointed by lack of democracy and the fact they are limited by the control of the left bureaucracy. Comments and critiques welcome.

After the mass strikes of 30 November as millions took action against the cuts to public sector pensions, we saw the depressingly familiar site of unaccountable union negotiators caving in just before Christmas in the face of government tough talk. This shows that there are some in the upper reaches of the union movement who have no real stomach for a fight, and are desperate to sell out our struggle at the first chance they can get.

Whilst PCS, NUT and UCU are battling on, and Unite has now unanimously voted against accepting the interim heads of agreement, the fight is on in the other unions to reject any proposed to accept this rotten deal.

There are two central tasks ahead of us. First - to stop the sell out in the unions where the deal might be pushed. A vigorous No campaign which makes the case for more action alongside other unions can scupper the bureaucrats plans.

We can maximise our ability to mount an effective no vote in those unions where a sell out is being pushed through a united campaign around this issue. Separate meetings of different left caucuses or anti cuts fronts will undermine and weaken our attempts to stop the sell out, we urgently need the maximum unity of all trade union activists, campaigns and left caucuses at this time to go back on the offensive.

Secondly - we have to start the work now to bring this dispute under the control of the rank and file. Whilst it is excellent that union leaders like Mark Serwotka (PCS) are pushing ahead, the pace of strikes and protests is too slow, the number is too infrequent. This will continue to be the case unless the members democratically take control of the strike with a strategy to bring the full force of the union movement to bear with sustained and coordinated mass strikes.

We need a joint conference of every trade unionist, anti cuts activists and anti-cuts group to fight the sell out. We need to build co-ordinations of all trade unionists and activists opposed to a sell out at a local and regional level, and coordinate them nationally to create an alternative rank and file leadership which can take control of the dispute from the union barons. Mark Boothroyd

**Pinheirinho, from page 4** ten thousand poor residents of the region. Some sources report the direct active resistance from residents and former residents of Pinheirinho within the state of Sao Paulo. Police also visited the United Steelworkers to prevent the arrival of solidarity. A community leader has disappeared and cameras and phones are being confiscated. The forces of

repression have made the site inaccessible. Information is contradictory, politicians like Mr. Ivan Valant (PSOL), Senator Eduardo Suplicy (PT) and the Socialist leader Joe Sixpack (PSTU) were isolated by the forces of repression in the Edgar School.

This was later contradicted by parliamentary press offices who said that negotiations were

ongoing in school. Part of the press said that the senator was not in Pinheirinho today, but on Saturday, but the YouTube confirmed the arrest. There are journalists who confirm that the politicians and teachers Almir Bento Freitas Alves and Lourdes were also detained at Edgar School. Almir and Lourdes are directors of Sinpo (Association of Professionals in Education in Education Hall of São Paulo).



# The Summer Riots: Engels and the English working

By Celia Ralph Reform International Socialist League

## Reform ISL

We are a group of comrades who have broken away from the ISL (International Socialist League), which is the British section of the LIT-CI, a mainly South American tendency in the Fourth International. The ISL was founded in 1988 when we broke away from the WRP to join the LIT. What attracted us to the LIT was their principled position on the need to build a democratic centralist world party to assist the working class to assimilate the means of production and build a socialist society. This led to a split with USEC when they abandoned this aim and succumbed to bourgeois nationalism. The other thing that attracted us to the LIT was its willingness to work in mass movements "even as a minority", in their words. This perspective guided our work and we did participate in many of the major struggles of the class for instance the Campaign Against Repression and for Democratic Rights in Iraq, the anti war movement, the fight against pit closures, the Balkan conflict and many others. We also played a part in building the Socialist Alliance and The United Socialist Party.

However we have in the last few years declined as a force for various reasons, not least the age related and inevitable decline of our leading member Bill Hunter who is now in his nineties and sadly handicapped by deafness and loss of short-term memory. This has led to differences surfacing in the branch, which came to a head over Libya. Some of us disagreed with the line of the LIT on the Libyan conflict and this led to a discussion in the branch. This is of course an entirely healthy thing, as everybody learns from a discussion. However it was thought the discussion was derailed by attempts to stifle it in the name of loyalty to the International. What appeared to happen was an attempt by leading members to impose a hierarchical relationship with the international, which would kill off any real living interaction to the detriment of the LIT and our section. We are only a small outfit and relationships had broken down to a state where it was nigh impossible for the branch to function. This proved to be the last straw which led to the split.

We have not split from the ISL because of differences over Libya, but because we were blocked from raising those differences within the LIT. These are important issues and we are still discussing them with the International so in that respect we had to leave before we could get a hearing. It is still our intention to work towards rejoining the LIT, perhaps initially as a sympathising section, and we wish to continue with our work with the Trotskyist Regroupment Caucus (TRC, Socialist Fight, RSO [Austrian based] and ex-Workers Power members) which we see as a promising development started on principled positions. We are the majority of those who founded the ISL and our perspective of working in movements is unchanged, and we find this perspective in the TRC also, and this includes the main task, which is to build the 4th. International as the world party.

For decades young people have been attacked and pushed into a corner. They live in a world of luxury life styles and goods, the communities where they live and their families have suffered unemployment and deteriorating living standards. When the riots started over police brutality, the frustration and anger broke through and escalated. Young people saw that in numbers they had some power. On televisions throughout the country youth watched as the police lost control when they took to the streets.

Their anger frustration and the desire for justice found an expression as more and more youth joined the rioters. There are those who proclaim that the rioters are somehow separate from society, some low life, under class. Prime Minister David Cameron said, "These are sickening scenes - scenes of people looting, vandalising, thieving, robbing, scenes of people attacking police officers and even attacking fire crews as they're trying to put out fires. This is criminality, pure and simple, and it has to be confronted and defeated. Ken Clarke, the Justice Secretary, described the rioters as a 'feral underclass'.

## Confusion on the left

Many on the left have been thrown into confusion about the nature of this movement; Is it a working class movement? Is it conscious? Is it an unconscious expression of frustration? Violence against your community is wrong and so the moral argument begins. Youth deserted by the unions and the left with their expectations and hopes for an independent life becoming increasingly more difficult, if not at times impossible turn to other means in their quest for life. This is an historical question.

Engels in his book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* written in 1845 states,

*The most violent attacks of the workers upon the bourgeoisie and its servants are the open, undisguised counterpart of what the bourgeoisie perpetuates secretly, treacherously against the workers... The earliest, crudest, and least fruitful form of this rebellion was that of crime... The working man and woman lived in poverty and want, and saw that others were better off than them. It was not clear in their minds why those who did more in society than the rich idler, should be the one to suffer under these conditions.*<sup>[1]</sup>

Engels was explaining the social background to crime and riots, he or the developing Marxist movement did not moralise over it. Since the riots thousands have been taken to court, many served with prison sentences. Courts worked around the clock dealing with rioters many of whom were imprisoned. One young man recently received a sentence of a year for handling stolen goods, a flat screen television.

Two Dundee youths, Shaun Ernest Divin (16), and Jordan McGinley (18), were each sentenced to three years for attempting to incite riots in the city on their Facebook page. His grandmother Doreen said: "People using knives get less than that — all he was doing was sitting on his laptop bantering with his mates." His grandfather John added: "Jeremy Clarkson can go on TV and say 'Take the strikers out and shoot them', but nothing's done about that.

In the far more publicised case Perry Sutcliffe-Keenan, 22 from Warrington, and Jordan Blackshaw, 21, from Northwich had their appeals against their savage four year

sentences turned down at the Court of Appeal. Lord Judge said: "The level of lawlessness was utterly shocking and wholly inexcusable." They failed to start a riot via Facebook.

This generation of youth have grown up in a world where there has been no political opposition in the main political parties. Corruption and exploitation, illegal wars, the destruction of the Welfare State and NHS, Banks bailed out with billions of pounds of public money.

Politicians fiddling millions in expenses breaking rules that if a worker had committed would have been condemned as a crime and face imprisonment. They have seen demonstrations of over half a million people against war and cuts and without any change in policy. Multi Nationals roam the world creating war and want. Laws that protect the rich and powerful and they are expected to have respect. Respect for what?

They cannot claim unemployment benefit until 18, and then they have to prove that they are actively seeking work. Looking for jobs that don't exist, if in work they are not entitled to the basic minimum wage until they are 21 years of age. At 21 most work available pays the minimum wage or less. University fees beyond the means of most youth and their families. They understand betrayal and that no party is fighting for their right to education work and training.

## What is different from the thirties?

Before they have started out on their life, they are told they cannot have work, education or a home and are expected to follow and respect a society run by millionaires for millionaires. A society that excludes them and demands they accept servitude and uses the force of the state to insure they comply. We are faced with an economic crisis which compares with that of the thirties. Long dole queues, bad housing, the rise of the far right wing and wars, Unlike the thirties is the working class is more educated aware of international issues and events. They have access to the internet, sharing information and experiences with others in this country and abroad.

They see movements in Greece and Spain and in other countries and can feel and make the connection. This is the beginning of a movement that will find expression in many ways. No, it is not 1930 or 1845 but the same system rules. The gap between the rich and poor, the working class and the capitalist is growing and cannot be contained. To quote the great man Engels again, *To the Working Classes of Great-Britain,*

*"Much remains to be undergone; be firm, be undaunted - your success in certain, and no step you will have to take in your onward march, will be lost to our common cause, the cause of Humanity!"*<sup>[2]</sup>

There has to be an alternative, a new workers party must be built. The sectarianism of the past has to be overcome. A party that is not afraid of the contradictions and builds with the youth and working class a party steeped in their history and developed with them and for them.

## Endnotes

<sup>[1]</sup> Engels, Frederick *The Condition of the Working Class in England* <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/>

<sup>[2]</sup> Ibid.

# Leon Trotsky – As he should be known By Ret Marut

## Review

In October 2011 Second Wave Publications gave us Leon Trotsky – As I knew him, a short article by the Indian Marxist-turned-renegade M.N. Roy – “written shortly after Trotsky’s

death in 1940”. Note Trotsky’s assassination by Stalin’s agent Ramon Mercader is not mentioned by Roy or in the preface, the “Publisher’s Note” (a political rational for the publication now). At the start of piece Roy quotes Lunacharsky’s Revolutionary Silhouettes in a character assassination bid. The piece says that the “The above picture was drawn in 1923, while Trotsky was at the height of his power...it was done by an admirer... the defects pointed out therein could be attributed neither to malice nor to wilful misrepresentation”

No so. Lenin had suffered deterioration in his health in late 1921 and the Troika of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev had begun conspiring to ensure Trotsky would not succeed Lenin in the event of his death. But Lenin recovered and “in mid-July 1922, Kamenev wrote a letter to the recovering Lenin to the effect that “(the Central Committee) is throwing or is ready to throw a good cannon overboard”, Lenin was shocked and responded:

“Throwing Trotsky overboard – surely you are hinting at that, it is impossible to interpret it otherwise – is the height of stupidity. If you do not consider me already hopelessly foolish, how can you think of that???” Wiki. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon\\_Trotsky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Trotsky)

So Lunacharsky is hedging his bets with this Silhouette, as he does with all the others, enough criticism to keep on the side of the Troika and enough praise of Trotsky (of course entirely omitted by Roy) to keep on Trotsky’s side should he succeed Lenin. For instance just after this devastating attack on Trotsky Lunacharsky wrote,

“Lenin...could never have coped with the titanic mission which Trotsky took upon his own shoulders, with those lightning moves from place to place, those astounding speeches, those fanfares of on the spot orders, that role of being the unceasing electrifier of a weakening army, now at one spot, now at another. There is not a man on earth who could have replaced Trotsky in that respect.”

So Trotsky, if we are to believe Lunacharsky and Roy, had no commitment to the revolution, just to his future legacy, “to go down in the memory of mankind surrounded by the halo of a genuine revolutionary leader”.

But on page 26 Roy gets into his real task of political assassination with his lies and distortions. “At least twice, Trotsky might have acted as the grave digger of the Russian Revolution if he was allowed to have his way” He lies openly about the three issues, falsifications which must be conscious, although by the last, the 1927 expulsion of Trotsky by the Executive Committee of the Communist International it is probable the he had politically degenerated to such an extent that he could no

longer tell the difference. The three issues are, 1. Brest-Litovsk, 2. The New Economic Policy (NEP) and 3. Socialism in a single country and his stance at his expulsion hearing in 1927.

### Brest-Litovsk

The celebrated historian E. H. Carr explains Brest-Litovsk:

“Lenin’s disagreements with Trotsky over Brest-Litovsk were less profound than those which separated him from the followers of Bukharin....the popular picture of Trotsky, the advocate of world revolution, clashing with Lenin, the champion of national security or socialism in one country, is so distorted as to be almost entirely false.” (The Bolshevik Revolution, vol. 3, page 54, our emphasis)

But Roy attributes Bukharin’s position to Trotsky, acting as if there were not three positions on the signing of the Treaty. He also neglects to tell us that Bukharin’s truly adventurous position for a revolutionary war against Germany was supported by the great majority of the Bolshevik party. And that Lenin had agreed to go along with Trotsky’s position and ALL (including Bukharin) had agreed to the signing of the Treaty once Germany gave a date for the resumed offensive. Trotsky’s position was neither war nor peace, to play a waiting game until revolution might break out in Germany, totally different from the revolutionary offensive line of Bukharin.

### NEP and Socialism in a single country

Trotsky proposed a version of the NEP on the CC a year before it was eventually adopted and later regretted not fighting for it more tenaciously at the time. He fully supported its implementation but, like Lenin, knew it was a measured retreat from the goals of socialism, forced by the delay in the development of the world revolution. Moreover Trotsky and the Left Opposition (LO) warned of the scissors crisis, the growing gap between the low price the peasants got for their produce and the increasing price of industrial goods.

The LO produced a plan for industrialisation but Stalin, in alliance with the rightist Bukharin faction now promoted the rich peasants; “enrich yourselves” and “socialism at a snail’s pace” are phrases from Bukharin in those days. These politics were eventually to lead to the grain crisis of 1928 where the peasants withheld their produce to force up the prices and the cities faced starvation. The LO had been proved correct, not having an industrial plan and not seeking to correct the Smychka (relationship with peasants) had led the USSR to the brink of counterrevolution.

In 1927 when Stalin and Bukharin defeated the LO in the 15<sup>th</sup> Party Congress Bukharin constantly heckled Trotsky and his supporters there, egged on by Stalin. The charge was refusal to support the NEP, the charge ignorantly repeated by Roy, seemingly unaware what happened the following year when NEP collapsed totally.

Of the Executive Committee of the Communist International discussion in 1927, where Trotsky



The United Opposition of 1926 was led by Leon Trotsky, Lev Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev.

was expelled, Roy says,

“Having agreed that it is not possible to build Socialism in the Soviet Union in the midst of a capitalist world there are two alternatives – either we should continue doing whatever is possible by way of advancing towards the ultimate goal of Socialism, pending the success of revolution in other countries; or we should lay down power in the Soviet Union and go back to emigration to wait for the time when there will be a revolution simultaneously throughout the world. I asked whether Trotsky would choose the latter alternative.

He shouted “No”. Then I would vote for his expulsion, because he had been advocating a policy without understanding its implications or without meaning to put it into practice if he had the opportunity to do so.

Here Roy displays his vast ignorance of the issues involved. It was never a question of building socialism in a single country or having to “lay down power in the Soviet Union and go back to emigration”. The LO were the first to advocate industrialisation, they had warned of the dangers of NEP developing the capitalist restoration danger now posed by Bukharin’s policies. What was at issue were 1. with what perspective you fought nationally and internationally and 2. did what was possible in the USSR, or later in China and Eastern Europe, amount to ‘socialism’ and could it survive indefinitely without world revolution?

The questions have now been answered by history, it was not socialism, although they were deformed and degenerated workers states which contained many progressive features which benefited the working class and which had to be defended. Trotsky and Trotskyists defended the USSR, Eastern Europe and China etc. up to capitalist restoration 1989-92.

And when eventually the (then) centrist Stalin turned on his rightist-restorationist ally Bukharin in 1928-29 it was because the disastrous over-reliance on the NEP had forced the situation. But in a truly bureaucratic manner the collectivisation of agriculture resulted in the huge famine in 1929-30, estimates are that between 4 and 12 million perished; brutal methods of bureaucratic imposition threw Soviet agriculture back decades.

But Stalin adopted a variant of the LO industrialisation plan, (drafted by Lunacharsky!), in the first five year plan that too was imposed in an undemocratic and brutal way. It brought the USSR to the brink of restoration again just before WWII broke out. (SF 9 will deal with the Publisher’s Note, 6th Comintern Congress in 1928, Mao, etc.)

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!



## My meeting with a Friend of Israel By Therese Peters

I have been a supporter of Palestine and her people for too long, much longer than I would have anticipated. I first became aware of the plight of the Palestinians in about 1982. All these years on, myself and her supporters around the globe, are appalled at what we know and see happening to her people, both in Palestine and on the international stage. I am almost made to feel as though I am committing some unspoken social faux pas if I mention Palestine! I am still trying to develop a hard skin for the usual accusatory conversation that is bound to follow!

I live in the Borough of Harrow and 'my' MP is Bob Blackman – Conservative. I have contacted him on several occasions about the systematic 'beyond cruel' treatment of Palestine and her brave supporters from every corner of the world. I have asked him to put forward Early Day Motions (EDMs) and bring this to the attention of parliament. I always receive a standard, bland reply defending the aggressors' right to security. He has always stated that he doesn't do EDMs.

I was notified of a National Lobby of Parliament on 23 November 2011 in support of Palestine – where we could meet our MPs and talk to them. The thought of speaking to Bob Blackman filled me with dread. I contacted his office to make an appointment on this day but heard nothing back. I contacted a couple of pro-Palestinian supporters to come with me to back me up but they were unable to come.

I went to Parliament and felt very nervous, having to pass by men with guns. I kept reminding myself I was in a democratic country, but the sight of these men frightened me. I asked one of them why we were being given such a 'welcome' and he said "in case of terrorists". I asked what terrorists and he said "well let's hope I don't have to use it on you". Was he joking, just trying to relieve the tension? I don't know.

I had two 'Free Palestine' badges on my jacket and, when the line I was in reached the security entrance, I was told to remove one of them. When I protested, saying what harm could a badge do he told me in no uncertain term; that only one badge was allowed in! I was photographed and put my second badge in my bag to be screened. He shouted to the person on X-ray that there was a badge in my bag. I can only imagine this was because the little tin badge constituted a threat of some sort! I was already highly anxious and nervous as I passed under 'the arch' to be screened. They asked which bag was mine

and searched it.

I proceeded to the meeting place for those who were lobbying for Palestine and registered. I told the monitors of my exchanges with the armed 'police' and the security check-point and they said this could be reported. I haven't done this. I was asked if I had made an appointment with my MP and I said Bob Blackman had not got back to me. I then saw a face in the room that I recognised but did not know well. He came towards me and said Bob Blackman was his MP too and that he had received an appointment. This man's name was Abe and I had been at several meetings over the years where we were aware of each other. He said I could share his appointment with him and we could both go in together. I wasn't too happy with this because I felt I wanted to have a real 'heart to heart' with Blackman and that sharing would not allow me to let rip!

I expressed my concern to Abe that I was more of an emotive speaker on behalf of the Palestinian people and that he was a measured, informed speaker on sanctions, rules etc. He felt we could work it together as long as I didn't 'lose it' and become too emotional. I said it would be hard and with some misgivings we went to meet Bob Blackman together.

I was the first through the second round of security and recognised Blackman immediately from the letters regularly posted through my door on his activities. I told him I recognised him and he asked me if I had an appointment, I said no but my friend has and I had been invited along. It was obvious he knew Abe and we sat together at a table in a café area. Abe spoke about many of the projects in the Occupied Territories – illegal settlements, Veolia, water etc. Veolia has long been an international target of activists due to their corporate complicity in Israel's war crimes and violations of international law.

I asked about his many trips to the region, who was paying for this, was he in cahoots with big companies? I told him that I didn't like the fact that he was a Friend of Israel – which I consider a murderous, terrorist state. Our voices were getting louder; we were becoming red-faced and sweaty. Whenever I made direct, hard-hitting points with Blackman, Abe would take over with facts, numbers and dates. Things would go along for a while talking about these matters and I would jump in with "do you ever go to the Palestinian areas or are you always being high-rolled with your Friends of Israel mob?" Blackman told us he had been to meet with the 'Arabs' and that

he found their hospitality second to none and yes he had been moved by the fact that they still kept and handed down the keys of their family homes.

Abe and I were becoming very heated though these exchanges. We spoke about the right to return with me saying any old racist from the Bronx or Russia could take the home of a Palestinian and the world politicians would say and do nothing. Abe jumped in to say he would be 'entitled' to a house in Israel but that Palestinians were living as refugees in their own country and many other countries besides.

As the never-ending heated exchanges between the three of us went on I was aware that Abe was thumping the table and becoming emotional, Blackman's face was becoming redder by the minute and I was coldly interjecting with "how can you live with yourself?" Blackman had had several calls to be somewhere else and eventually we stood to our feet to being our uncomfortable debate to a close. I left feeling exhilarated, because, despite our differences, myself and Abe had worked in tandem with the same goal firmly in mind – Justice for Palestine.

### Abe Hayeem adds,

Blackman was unable to say yes or no to the question "Do you think settlement expansion is wrong?"

It seems that he had actually visited the West Bank on his own steam, and agreed that the Palestinians were hospitable and friendly, and still had the keys to their homes. He did say that he warned the Israelis that if they did not come to an agreement, the result would be a one state solution – which is quite an admission. I then said there was hope for him yet! When asked how he received such a strong 'tan' (which was the reason for his red face) he did say that he had been on holiday- to which we said that MPs were lucky to keep going on holiday! The meeting ended on quite a 'friendly' note, with the feeling that he must have registered something of what we were saying, even though he would never admit it. As a post-script, I received a reply to the petition sent to MPs over the shooting dead of Mustafa Tamimi at the Nabi Saleh demonstrations against the settler land grabs. Blackman says "*These provocative actions escalate the situation and prompt Israeli forces to respond with non-lethal (sic) crowd dispersal methods. Stone throwing is a public order offence and should be discouraged to prevent repeat incidents*"!

He then said that Israel's Central Command had ordered "full and separate investigations, and he awaits their conclusions with interest". He will be receiving a strong reply from me!

## Once Again—No Support for British jobs for British workers By Charlie Walsh

We support the Bombardier workers in their struggle to defend their right to work, their jobs, wages and conditions. We call on workers to occupy their factory and they must call on the British and German working class and workers internationally, to support their struggle. We do

not support the slogan 'British jobs for British workers'.

As workers, socialist and internationalists, we say this slogan is an appeal to reactionary British economic nationalism. In an imperialist country like Britain, this slogan is politically toxic, chauvin-

ist, racist even and is very, very dangerous. It infers that the problem of the working class losing jobs in Britain is not capitalism but foreign workers. This has echoes of the racist politics of the BNP, EDL, UKIP and extreme right Tories, some Labour party MPs and trade union leaders such as Bob Crowe. We are for jobs

Continued on p. 35

## Two Salient points on the Libyan up-rising – in defence of vulnerable Libyans

By Ella Downing

So, the people of Libya have been liberated from years of oppression and violence, and under their own steam surge forward in a cause of progress and liberty. Gaddafi has fallen, and the National Transitional Council, as the voice of the people, begins to transform the country into a democratic and free society.

I make two points on this sentiment, so lamentably popular in state propaganda outlets, tabloids and lefty rags alike.

Firstly, the pogroms which happened during the uprising saw the rape and mass murder of many a man, woman and child. There is evidence that ethnic cleansing and public lynchings were initiated by rebels on the ground and also ordered at command level. Whole towns which were populated by black people are now empty, migrant workers and black Libyans have fled for fear of torture and death. Untold pits lay ten deep with the bodies of these people.

A revolutionary uprising generally knows its enemy to be the state and the institutions which support it, and its friends and comrades to be the workers and their families. A popular uprising does not generally kill its most vulnerable members. A right-wing coup would, however, fight on two fronts, the state it wishes to replace and the people it wishes to oppress.

Secondly, the NTC under Mustafa Abdul Jalil has instituted Sharia law without a mandate and

declared any law which contradicts their interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence to be 'null and void'. The immediate reintroduction of polygamy was first on the agenda. A man may now take up to four wives regardless of his ability to support them, with corresponding laws such as a woman's rights to initiate a divorce being nullified, and the voiding therefore of any child custody rights.

This attack on the civil rights of women moves responsibility for the health and happiness of women and her children away from the state and into the hands of charity and the good-will of husbands, who we know can be ever so fickle in their standards. Coupled with the gruesome victimisation of black people, this effectively demonstrates that whatever revolutionary spirit or ideals sparked this uprising were quickly dissipated, overpowered by a collection of Islamists, social conservatives and ex-Gaddafi thugs.

Ah, but Gaddafi is gone, and now Libya has the political space to grow its radical consciousness, I hear some of you say. She has overcome a hurdle which had she not no progress could ever be made. What happened happened, it was but a hiccup in the long fight, a fly in the ointment. So, we are very sorry to all you vulnerable sorts, but please on this occasion take this bullet for the cause, be shackled forever to



**Cameron and Sarkozy meet NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdul Jalil September 15, 2011 in Tripoli; the NTC under Mustafa Abdul Jalil has instituted Sharia law without a mandate and declared any law which contradicts their interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence to be 'null and void'.**

a man who mistreats you, with no mode of redress, or otherwise to a tank, as it displays your unwanted black skin to the righteous inheritors of Libya, up-standing Arabic men, and we, the political talking-heads, when we remember you exist at all, will be grateful.

That so many are not fully aware of the pogroms and oppression of Libya's women at the hands of the rebels and NTC is unfortunate. That the Guardian led the way in exposing crimes against migrant labourers while many a lefty rag omitted to mention them is a shame. But to argue, or even imply by underplaying the significance and horror of these things, that you cannot make an omelette without rounding up and shooting black people, or that the vilification of women is somehow secondary to the omelette itself, is utterly reprehensible.

You know who you are.

## International relations established with comrades in Argentina and Sri Lanka

Thursday, 29 December 2011

Dear Comrade Gerry & Glenn,

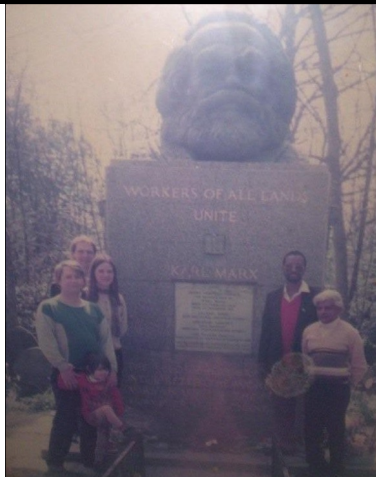
A few days ago I met comrade Peter and e discussed about our future work. We decided to publish a magazine the near future. And we also decided to make an international relationship with your organizations. So we would like to see your publications and perspective documents.

Comrade Sirimal, Sri Lanka

### Militant Bolshevik Tendency

We are a group of Argentinean Trotskyist activists. We've passed through several political experiences, starting with the Partido Obrero of Argentina from which we withdrew because of its increasing electoralism.

Later we came together in the formation of the PBCI, an activist nucleus which was formed on



**International Trotskyist Tendency comrades from Britain, South Africa and Sri Lanka at Marx's graveside in 1995. In political collaboration again.**

the basis of revolutionary defencism. We ended up breaking with the PBCI due to the abandonment of its internationalist policy when it came to defending the sanctity of Israel against attacks by Palestinian guerrillas and on the Polish question (1981) the leadership of PBCI defended martial law against the workers movement.

In practical reasons, our break with the PBCI was also motivated by the PBCI's growing isolation from the vanguard of the masses.

In recent years, we came together in the formation of Batalla Marxista which we left due to their pro-imperialist policies in relation to Libya, because we were for the defeat of NATO and its agents. In Libya, Batalla Marxista saw

as progressive the advance of imperialism.

After many experiences we have formed the TMB and address ourselves to the LCFI formed by the British Socialist Fight and by the Brazilian Communist League to start a relationship that seeks a principled reconstruction of the Fourth International.

From now on the grounds of the Castilian language in Argentina suggest a change of name to be used in Argentina. The name we suggest is COMITÉ DE VINCULACIÓN POR LA CUARTA INTERNACIONAL - CVCI.

Greetings Leon Carlos,

Saludos. Gerry Downing.

From: Leon Carlos tendencia.militante.bolchevique@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, 5 Jan 2012

To: <socialist\_fight@yahoo.co.uk>

Subject: adherencia

Dear colleagues: from the TMB endorse the statement on Libya made on April 21, 2011 by the LC, SF and the GMR.

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**

# Defence of the Imperialist Nation State is a reactionary trap for the working class

By AJ Byrne

## Polemic

The Weekly Worker headline writer titled the piece by Dave Douglas, Defence of the nation-state (WW 839 December 8). As someone who has disagreed with headlines put on my articles in this case it is spot on. At the end of the article Dave spots a problem in his review of VN Gelis "How the IMF broke Greece: eyewitness reports and role of the fake left",

*"Admittedly there are things in it which make me feel uneasy - the highlighting of "mass illegal immigration" and its effect on the already straining system, for example - but comrade Gelis is not trying to put a gloss on anything, or smooth any sensibilities."*

I would suggest this, and the political trajectory behind it, is the mother and father of all problems, it did not smooth any of my sensibilities and made me feel not just 'uneasy' but hopping mad. Or at least it would have done had I not known the road down which this comrade had gone many years ago.

Comrade VN Gelis, a Greek who poses as a Trotskyist, has the following position on Immigration:

*"Illegal immigration is not an exclusively Greek phenomenon. Yet Greece has received an enormous number of illegal immigrants, out of any proportion with its size and resources. This fact is not unrelated to the infamous Schengen agreement, which defines Greece as a country responsible for the initial reception of refugees - a door open for the whole of Europe.*

*As a result, we have a dramatic rise of unemployment, and the modification of its nature. It is no longer conjunctural. It has become synonymous with the social marginalisation of the Greek worker. The destruction of his social conquests and rights. Of course the government and some of its fervent "enemies" are denying all this. But working people know very well what is happening, as they are the ones called upon to pay the bill."*

<http://www.evangelos12.btinternet.co.uk/>

This is racist to the core because it considers the Greek worker first and begins the struggle for workers' rights on a national basis. Marxism is a universal doctrine which fights for human equality on a material basis, in the here and now when we overthrow our global oppressors, world imperialism. Our New Jerusalem is here on earth, to be fought for right now, with that perspective. Progressive humanity has understood this right back to the English Civil war with

John Lilburn, the Levellers et al.

## Capitalism cannot be defeated on a national basis

And here lies the nub of the matter, because capitalism cannot be defeated on a national basis although it is true that revolutions must be made on a national basis, but with an internationalist perspective from the very start. What Gelis is proposing in practice will result in 'indigenous' workers attacking immigrant workers in alliance with a far right section of the capitalist class to maintain the privileges of an aristocracy of labour. That was the essence of the reactionary strikes around British jobs for British workers Socialist Fight fought against so well.

It was Jewish immigrant workers who turned out the vast bulk of the 300, 000 that defeated Mosley in 1936 Cable Street; the appearance of the Irish dockers at the eastern end of Cable street, where the Irish immigrant community lived, supplied the final barrier to the police and the fascists, both the Jewish and Irish tenements rained bricks, bottles and piss pots down on the police, arresting a number and forcing the historic retreat of the state forces who were so obviously allied with the fascist on the day. This unified the whole class behind the oppressed and threatened minority Jewish community to begin the revival of the WHOLE class after the defeats of the 1930s.

There was a historic close connection between the Jewish Tailors' union and the Irish in the dockers union going back to the 1890, according to Davis Rosenberg, in his *Battle for the East End* (Five leaves publications, 2011). Likewise it was Irish immigrant dockers and women workers in the 1890s (the Dockers tanner strike of 1889 and Bryant and May's match girls' strike of 1888, labourers and women workers in the New Unionism movement) that saw the unification of the WHOLE class behind them that resulted in the formation of the Labour party as a bourgeois workers party after the 1903 Taff Vale judgement. Always the poorest and most oppressed are the immigrants; it is reactionary going to war in alliance with the far right against immigrants blocing with one section of the capitalist class using the fake argument that we want to defeat those other capitalists who want to exploit those workers as cheap labour. We must fight for trade union conditions and rates of pay for ALL workers;

✓ΟΧΙ ΣΤΟ ΡΑΤΣΙΣΜΟ ΝΑ-ΠΑΣΟΚ-ΛΑΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΕ  
✓ΟΧΙ στην επαναπροώθηση των μεταναστών  
✓ΟΧΙ στα στρατόπεδα συγκέντρωσης

ΤΗΝ ΚΡΙΣΗ ΝΑ ΠΛΗΡΩΣΟΥΝ ΟΙ ΚΑΠΙΤΑΛΙΣΤΕΣ  
ΔΟΥΛΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΚΑΙΩΜΑΤΑ ΓΙΑ ΟΛΟΥΣ



ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΑΝΑΣΤΕΣ  
ΕΡΓΑΤΕΣ ΕΝΩΜΕΝΟΙ  
ΣΥΓΚΕΝΤΡΩΣΗ  
ΠΕΜΠΤΗ 25 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ, 7Μ.Μ.  
ΑΓ. ΒΕΝΙΖΕΛΟΥ  
ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΟΙ, ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΔΙΚΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΙ ΦΟΡΕΙΣ

Protest march call in Thessaloniki –  
"Greek and Immigrant workers united", posted by Clandestina on  
25 June 2009.

1. No borders, no immigration controls, a working man or woman has the right to seek work anywhere on the planet where they can get the best price for their labour while Capital roams the planet in search of profit without let or hindrance. It is a measure of the strength of the organised working class that there are still some relatively progressive immigration laws left. They are disappearing rapidly. When they all go then we will have fascism. And quoting Lenin against immigration in defence of the first workers state is an unprincipled slight of hand.

2. Only on a global scale can we defeat all the ills of capitalism. In particular the slogan of the world revolution sets Trotskyism apart from all other political currents on the planet in understanding the global nature of capitalism AND the necessary global approach to programme and practice of a world party of the socialist revolution to solve this crisis.

3. If you reject the programme of world revolution and that the working class as one global class and only when that WHOLE class fights for ALL its members and for ALL the poor and oppressed on the planet will it be able to raise its sights to the world revolution then you end up like VN Gelis as a theoretical reactionary, the most fake of the "fake lefts" he rails against in the sub-title of his book.

Will he go to Dover and Heathrow and picket to demand that the Nazi sympathisers in the Border Agency do their jobs properly, arrest all (dark-skinned, of course) immigrants (by implication not just the illegal ones) and cease conspiring against the "white British working class"? This crisis throws a sharp spotlight on reactionary views posing as 'leftism'; VN Gelis is advocating a most dangerous perspective.

## The Campaign against Euro-federalism

This perspective is implicitly endorsed by the likes of the Campaign against Euro-federalism in a letter in Morning Star on 7 November by its Secretary John Boyd, *Labour must defend the nation state against EU*, <http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/content/view/>



full/111643. In this letter Boyd present the following theses for his arguments,

*"We live in an era of the EU and near world domination of transnational capital. The nation state is the only mechanism which history has evolved for imposing social control on private capital."*

And is this nation state not an Imperialist state which commands the allegiances of no small amount of 'transnational capital' itself, in fact is not the whole struggle of Cameron (and Blair and Brown back to Lloyd George and before) dedicated to the protection of the institutions of the City of London, the second most important seat of 'transnational capital' in the world after Wall Street and the mainstay of the British economy for a century and more? Ah but Boyd and his comrades are dedicated to defending British manufacturing (the main economic campaign of the Morning Star) against foreign manufacturing. Ian Scott, one of his co-thinkers writes,

*"The government says it wants to build our manufacturing industry (quite rightly) but is destroying simultaneously our train making capacity in Derby. We must stop it even at this late stage. The Bombardier jobs must be retained in Britain. If this means challenging EU rules so be it – our jobs are more important!"*

*Therefore, contact your MP, whoever he/she is, and tell them Bombardier jobs must remain in Britain not shipped to Siemens in Germany because of EU rules or incompetence by our government – it doesn't speak for us anyway! Also, demand Unite EC members hold discussions with Unite members at Bombardier, if it has not already done so, and leads a national fight to save the Derby jobs."*

So British workers should ally with one section of the British Imperialists (led by Clegg and Miliband) and place demands on another section (led by Cameron, who only sometimes gets things right, the 'quite rightly' above) to abandon the City and turn to manufacturing. And we will achieve this by appearing to be better organisers of British Imperialism than the current misguided Cameron, to know what is good for it and to offer it very sensible and constructive advice; *"look if you want capitalism to work as we do, this is how you must do it"*.

*"These wretched revolutionists, in a conflict with any serious enemy, think first of all of how to imitate him, how to repaint themselves in his colours, and how to win the masses by means of a smart trick and not by revolutionary struggle. A truly shameful posing of the question!"*

Leon Trotsky, Thälmann and the "People's Revolution", (April 1931)

*"The most important political task for democrats and the labour movement is to join in an international campaign in defence of the nation state"* says Boyd. Definitely do not do that, comrades. You must fight for your own class

demands by the class struggle methods which are the only way to defend your class interests. And that class struggle has to be internationalist or it must fail and end in the disaster of WWII. But comrade Boyd is opposed to this, *"An amorphous borderless system where workers band together against 'bosses' is not internationalism"* he claims. It is not? Why should workers not band together across borders against "bosses", especially against those in quotation marks?

But the "internationalism" of Boyd really does deserve the quotation marks. *"Internationalism includes solidarity with the peoples of Greece now defending their nation state against the EU, European Central Bank, IMF and International Institution of Financiers"* This really is a bogus internationalism, consisting of the sum total of national struggles, fought nationally then totted up in "solidarity". And we must counterpose this nationalist popular frontist internationalism to a genuine workers' anti-Imperialist internationalism directly fighting all bosses internationally.

And how bad are the far right Tory Euro-sceptics and the Euro-phobic fascists asks Boyd, *"To label some who oppose the EU as 'vermin' and say the left should not work with them is an insult and unhelpful to say the least. More, it is a cover to table impractical objectives to reform the EU like pan-European workers rights."*

## Workers control of production

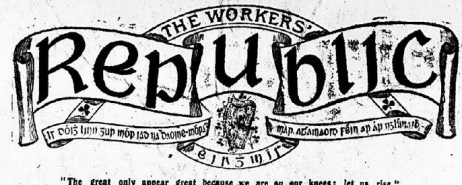
Of course revolutionists do not wish to "reform the EU" no more than we want to reform Britain. The point is with what perspectives you approach the defence of workers jobs and rights? Can these be protected more adequately in Britain alone or do we need an internationalist perspective to fight this struggle; the Socialist United States of Europe and the World Federation of Socialist States?

How does it help us to advance to that goal if we break our links with the European and world working class and begin thinking that, *"The Thameslink order must go to Derby not Siemens thus saving 1400 job losses at Derby along with some 13000 jobs lost in the supply chain weakening our already diminishing manufacturing base"*.

No, we must occupy plants threatened with closure, not appeal to Tories in defence of British jobs for British workers as Bob Crowe et al have done over Derby jobs. And we must make common cause with German and all workers internationally in defence of ALL jobs by producing a plan of production for need and not for profit, work sharing with no loss of pay, public works, tax the rich, open the book of capitalist firms to make the case for workers control of production. This demand arose in the 1940s

FOR LATE NOTES SEE PAGE TWO.

PRICE ONE PENNY.



Vol. 1., No. 47.

DUBLIN, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1916.

[Weekly]

**The masthead of James Connolly's last Workers Republic, 15 April 1916, nine days before the Easter Rising, "The struggle for the national independence of an oppressed colonial or semi-colonial nation like Ireland in 1916 or Libya in 2011 is wholly progressive".**

because the centralisation of the European economies for war production gave workers a glimpse of what could be done if the will was there and production was planned for human need. If we put the needs of workers first we will reject this anti-European reactionary nonsense.

Boyd then plays the backward workers card, *"Anti-trade union rulings of the EU Court of Justice have been laid on top of anti-trade union laws in Britain. This and the free movement of capital and labour within the EU are evidence enough to show that all EU institutions take the side of transnational capital."*

He hopes we will forget that it was the British parliament that produced the model anti trade union laws which were later adopted by the majority of the capitalist states on the planet.

And now Boyd, having proposed an alliance with the far right, suggests we must adopt their politics lest they win the leadership of this reactionary movement, *"The broad campaign to oppose the EU is weakened by the absence of large sections of the labour movement. Further, there needs to be a full understanding that if the labour movement and left do not join in this opposition then the far-right will take charge. Anti-EU activists and organisations have made clear that racists or fascists will not be tolerated even though they mouth opposition to the EU."*

Racists or fascists apparently are not sincere anti-internationalists. This accolade truly belongs to the labour movement, which is proving somewhat reluctant, despite Bob Crowe.

And to cap it all he has the effrontery directly to compare Imperialist Britain in 2011 with colonial Ireland in 1916, *"A century ago James Connolly in Ireland stated that class war includes the struggle for national independence and democracy and includes others from a different class. Britain now faces the same struggle."* The struggle for the national independence of an oppressed colonial or semi-colonial nation like Ireland in 1916 or Libya in 2011 is wholly progressive. Easter Rising leader PH Pearse was not a 1916 David Cameron. Championing the rights of Imperialist Britain against Imperialist Europe and inviting the working class to take sides in this conflict between these predatory thieves is wholly reactionary.

# THE FRAMING OF MICHAEL McKEVITT (PART ONE) By Michael Holden

## IRPSG pages

"Tell me what to do, make it worth my while, and as long as the benefit overrides the risk in my view, it will be done to the best of my ability."

These were the words uttered by informer David Rupert in reply to a question put to him by his MI5 and FBI handlers.

Two years earlier in August 1998 a bomb exploded in the small market town of Omagh, County Tyrone, killing 29 people and injuring scores of shoppers. The bombing was claimed by the Real IRA - which subsequently declared a cease-fire. The Irish and British media immediately linked the 32 County Sovereignty Movement (32CSM) to the Real IRA. The 32CSM denied any such link, and issued a statement which said: "We are deeply saddened and devastated by the terrible tragedy in Omagh. We share the grief and sorrow of everyone on the island of Ireland and offer our sincere sympathy to the injured, the bereaved, their families and friends at this moment in time. The killing of innocent people can never be justified in any circumstances." The statement went on to say the 32CSM was a political movement and not a military group, and rejected categorically any suggestion publicly made that the 32 County Sovereignty Movement was responsible in any way.

Founded in 1997 following a rift within Provisional Sinn Féin, the 32CSM had Bernadette Sands-McKevitt as one of its founding members. Bernadette was the sister of Bobby Sands,

the poet and revolutionary, who died in 1981 following 66 days on hunger-strike - endeavouring to gain political status for he and his comrades in Long Kesh concentration camp. Bernadette Sands was also the wife of Michael McKevitt whom the media wrongly accused of being the "leader of the Real IRA."

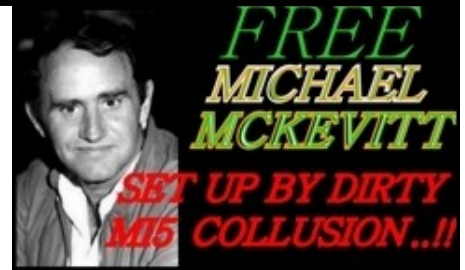
Arrested in May 2000 (long after the Omagh tragedy) he was questioned about membership of an 'illegal organisation.' He was released without charge. He was never questioned about the Omagh bombing, neither was he ever a member of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement.

However the wheels were now well and truly set in motion to find a scapegoat - someone to find responsible, someone to blame for Omagh. What was lacking was evidence, hard evidence. This 'difficulty' was soon put right when in the summer of 2000, members of the British MI5 and the FBI met in Washington. The sole purpose of this meeting was to implicate and frame Michael McKevitt.

Several years earlier the FBI had supplied MI5 with a paid tout by the name of David Rupert. Rupert was a career informant of 30 years. He was also a petty criminal involved in fraud of every description - and suspected of being implicated in white slavery.

But Rupert's criminal background was no obstacle! As far as MI5, the FBI and the Irish Intelligence Agency was concerned, Rupert had an even more important role to play in the framing of Michael McKevitt.

Michael and Bernadette were arrested in a blaze of publicity. He was told his arrest was 'a



political decision'! When Bernadette was told her husband was charged, the Garda (Irish police) mocked her, telling her she would no longer be able to continue with her political work. In March 2001 she was released without charge, but Michael McKevitt was taken before the no-jury Special Criminal Court (SCC) in Dublin and charged with "directing the activities" of an illegal organisation, and membership of the same organisation - namely the Irish Republican Army. He was refused bail and told that an MI5 and FBI informant by the name of Rupert would give evidence against him in any future trial.

However - and here is where the twist is in the tail - Michael McKevitt was made an offer by the Director of Public Prosecutions. The offer was - if he agreed to plead guilty to the 'IRA membership' charge, then the charge of 'directing terrorism' charge would be dropped! But despite the offer to drop the 'directing terrorism' charge (which would have resulted in a far less sentence) Michael refused on the basis it was an attempt by the prosecution to conceal the stitch-up and thereby bolster the civil case against him.

The stage was now set for the framing of Michael McKevitt!

### The Irish Freedom Committee's list of Republican POWs last updated 28/8/11

**Maghaberry Gaol  
Roe 3**

**Old Road  
Ballinderry Upper  
Lisburn  
Ireland  
BT28 2PT**

Joe Barr  
Barry Boardmann  
Francis Carletonn  
Brian Cavlann  
Joe Connor  
Colin Duffy  
Dominic Dynes  
Harry Fitzsimmons  
Michael Johnstonn

Darryn McCallionn  
Brendan McConville  
Sean McConvillen  
Jason McCormack  
Mark McGuigan  
Gerard McManus  
Damien McKenna  
Damien McLaughlin  
Martin McLoone  
Christopher Nash  
Kevin Barry Nolan  
Phil O'Donnell  
Stevie O'Donnell  
Robert O'Neill  
Liam Raineyn  
Sean O'Reilly  
Tony Rooney  
Brian Sheridan  
Gary Toman  
Daniel Turnbull  
Willie Wong

### John Paul Wooton Special Supervision Unit - Isolation

Liam Campbell  
Gavin Coyle  
**FEMALE REPUBLICAN WING**  
Marian McGlinchey  
Price

### INDEPENDENT POLITICAL PRISONERS

Noel Maguire  
**Portlaoise  
Portlaoise Gaol  
Portlaoise  
County Laoise  
Ireland  
E-2**  
Patrick Tierney  
Liam Rainey  
Tom O'Hanlon  
Jackie Bates  
Ciaran Dunne

Ken Donohoe  
Tony Hyland  
Robbie Kearns  
Michael McDonald  
Michael McKevitt  
David Jordan  
Toirealach MacDhómhnaill  
Cormac Fitzpatrick

**E-3**  
Derek Brady  
John Brock  
Sean Connolly  
Anthony Crowley  
Bernard Dempsey  
Aidan Hulme  
Robert Hulme  
Jim McCormick  
Thomas Morris  
Fintan Paul O'Farrell  
Barry Petticrew  
Declan John Rafferty  
**E-4**  
Liam Grogan - Kildare

Darren Mulholland -  
Dundalk

IRSP prisoners:

Owen Clail  
Denis Dwyer  
Eugene Kelly  
Paul Kelly  
Paddy Wall  
Thomas Kelly  
Gerard Kelleher

Neil Myles  
Jonathan Keogh  
Noel Mooney  
Gareth Bryne  
Anthony Lee

### Other Gaols

**MAGILLIGAN  
PRISON  
Point Road  
Limvady Co. Derry  
BT 49 OLR**  
Liam Hannaway

**The Grove  
Castlereagh  
Castlereagh,  
Co Roscommon  
Ireland**  
(IRSP) Eddie McGarrigle  
Johnny McCrossan  
**Ecrou 293249  
Div. 1 Cellule 217  
Maison D'arret De la  
Sante  
42 Rue De La Sante  
75014  
Paris, Cedex 14  
France D1217**  
Kieron Doran  
**LUKISKES PRISON  
Lukiskiu bstr. 6  
Vilnius, LT 01108  
Lithuania**  
Michael Campbell

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

# Defend Civil Liberties: Political Status for Irish Republican Prisoners, repeal the Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) powers—IRPSG

Speakers at the Labour Representation Committee Conference on 19 November included left MPs John McDonnell, Jeremy Corbyn, and Katy Clark, Dot Gibson, General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention; Harin-gey community and Youth Worker Symeon Brown, Steve Kelly of the Unite sparks campaign and Unison NEC member Jon Rogers, who gave the closing speech.

The motion from the IRPSG below was passed by approx. 250 votes to 6 It is a model motion for all Labour movement bodies, Labour CLPs, Trades Union Councils and other political and community organisations.

*"Evidence of paid and schooled informants resembles internment, where persons were put in jail on the suspicion, prejudice or dislike of anonymous agents. The social and political consequences of accepting evidence of a long-term paid informant like Rupert (highly paid informant David Rupert) are very serious and long-lasting.... (The document) The Framing of Michael McKevitt, (presents a) strong argument for the innocence of Michael McKevitt".*

In like manner Michael Campbell was set up in a 'sting' operation by MI5, the Irish and Lithuanian intelligence agencies and jailed in Lithuania on 21 October 2011 for 12 Years. The spooks had in fact initiated the arms deal on which he was convicted. His lawyer, Ingrida Botyriene, said: "He would never be involved in arms deals and would never go to Lithuania for such an affair if he had not been provoked by secret agents."

Marian Price - a founder-member of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement - is one of a number of political activists held without trial. To be a member of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement is by no means illegal, nor is it a criminal offence to support or join this organisation. It is not proscribed by law, nor is the Irish Republican Prisoner's Welfare Association (which Marian Price helped found) and was, until her arrest and (illegal) detention, that group's secretary. Her 'crime' apparently is she 'poses a significant threat to society.'! She held a piece of paper for a masked man who read a speech from it!

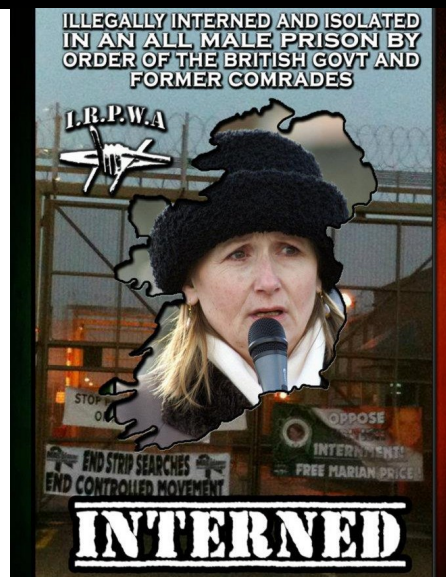
Marian Price was released from Armagh Prison in 1980, having been granted an RPM - a Royal Prerogative of Mercy - as she was suffering from anorexia and tuberculosis brought on by forced-feeding and ill-treatment. This means the Secretary of State was not legally entitled to order her return to prison as she had been released by Royal Prerogative of Mercy - and not on licence. The Price legal team are now thought to be preparing to launch a legal challenge in the light of this information.

Lurgan man Martin Corey, who had served 20 years in Long Kesh, was arrested in April 2010 and his licence, was revoked, according to British Secretary of State, Shaun Woodward, who had him arrested. He was not released on licence either and had served an extra two years, having refused to sign any such licence agreement, so as to be able to politically campaign for his Republican beliefs. He is still held in Maghaberry. In October, 2009 Brendan Lillis was arrested and had his license revoked, despite no charges being pressed against him, for alleged involvement in an attempted robbery. He suf-

**T**he situation of Irish Republican prisoners in the north of Ireland continues to deteriorate; they are subject to frequent beatings and brutal strip searches in Maghaberry. From May 2011 some have been on dirty and no-shave protest, evoking memories of the blanket men and hunger strikers of the late 70s and early 80s. More than 13 years after the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) on 10 April 1998 there are still 62 Irish Republican Prisoners in Ireland and 2 abroad, not counting remand prisoners, according to the Irish Freedom Committee - POW List of 28/8/2011. These prisoners are in jail because they oppose the partition of Ireland, via the British occupation of the six north eastern counties, by British Imperialism and the GFA, which they contend merely seeks to legitimise this partition and occupation. None would be in jail if Britain did not occupy the six north eastern counties of Ireland.

Under the terms of the GFA those republicans still opposing the GFA and continuing to fight for a united Ireland have lost their Special Category status and are treated more or less as common criminals. In August 2010 after a protest that went on since Easter of that year an agreement was reached and signed by the prisoners' representatives and by the prison authorities in Maghaberry Prison. The agreement conceded the two demands of the prisoners, freedom of movement and an end to strip searching. A body scanner was provided instead. But the screws broke the agreement within weeks, the first prisoner going out to court was brutally strip searched. Colin Duffy was strip searched 8 times for a 4 day court hearing, so brutally that he had very obvious injuries and appeared in court naked from the waist up because he refused to wear a prison uniform top.

Frame up and revocation of the licences of some of those released under the GFA constitute a hidden form of internment of those who wish to continue the Republican struggle. Human Rights campaigner Monsignor Raymond Murray has this to say on the framing of Michael McKevitt;



fers from a chronic medical condition called, ankylosing spondylitis, which causes the spine to fuse and, though now moved to an outside hospital, he remains interned.

Mohammed Hamid was found guilty in early 2008 of "soliciting to murder" under legislation dating back to 1861, despite never actually instructing anyone to any specific act. Months of surveillance, both through undercover agents and covert recording, produced no evidence at all; everything was inferred and circumstantial. He was given an extremely severe sentence of 7 ½ years, together with the "imprisonment for public protection (IPP)." This sentence is extremely controversial, amounting to a life sentence, unless an individual can prove that he is no longer a risk to the public. As Hamid, based on the evidence, was never accused of a violent act, how would he be expected to demonstrate that he has reformed and is no longer a risk to the public, if there was never any risk to begin with?

According to Brian Barder's website, "Nearly half of the more than 6,000 IPP prisoners in our prisons have completed the punishment and deterrence element in their sentences: they continue to endure the harsh punishment of imprisonment, not for anything they have done — they have already been punished for that — but because our risk-terrified society is scared to release them for fear that they might one day, in some way, re-offend. They are being brutally punished for offences they haven't committed and which they might well never commit, if released. And it's worse than an ordinary prison sentence because the IPP prisoner can have no idea when or even whether, he will ever be released." <http://www.barder.com/2942>

These conditions in Ireland, taken together with the Islamophobia highlighted by Mohammed



Hamid's conviction, are a full-frontal assault on civil liberties and threaten the liberty of every serious trade unionist and political activist. Any serious opponent of the capitalist system would never be released if arrested under these IPP powers.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an African-American writer and journalist, author of six books and hundreds of columns and articles, who has spent the last 29 years on Pennsylvania's death row. His demand for a new trial and freedom is supported by heads of state from France to South Africa, by Nobel Laureates Nelson Mandela, Toni Morrison, Desmond Tutu, by the European Parliament, by distinguished human rights organizations like Amnesty International, city governments from Detroit to San Francisco to Paris, scholars, religious leaders, artists, scientists, the Congressional Black Caucus and other members of U.S. Congress, the NAACP, labor unions, and by countless thousands who cherish democratic and human rights – and justice – the world over.

#### We therefore demand:

1. Immediate implementation of the Agreement of August 2010 conceding freedom of movement and an end to strip searching.
2. Restoration of Political Status to all Irish Republican political prisoners in the north of Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and abroad.
3. Repatriation of Michael Campbell and no extradition to Lithuania of his brother Liam, framed by the same secret intelligence agencies.
4. Release of Marian Price and Martin Corey and an end to arrest using the excuse of revoking the GFA license – this amounts to political censorship and a reintroduction of internment in another name.
5. Repeal the "Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection" laws: free Mohammed Hamid, free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

**Note:** The question of the IPP is hugely contro-

versial; here is one account of the controversy over IPP in the Labour Party:

<http://labourlist.org/2011/10/how-labour-should-respond-to-ken-clarke%E2%80%99s-sentencing-reforms/>

From the Labour party's own website;

Sadiq Khan MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Secretary, responding to reports in The Times today that the Tory-led Government plans to introduce amendments to the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill abolishing Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPPs), said:

*"The Tory-led Government's plan to abolish Indeterminate sentences for Public Protection and replace them with fixed-term sentences doesn't address some serious questions about public protection. Their plans are totally out of touch with public concerns about the risk posed by some of the most serious and violent offenders."*

## Delegation to Derry for 40th Anniversary

**A**n IRPSG delegation will visit Derry for the 2012 Bloody Sunday 40th anniversary march to demonstrate our solidarity with the aims of the March.

This 40th anniversary event was not organised by Sinn Féin, who have drawn a line under the commemoration as if justice had been done with the Saville Report. It began with a meeting organised under the auspices of the Civil Rights Veterans' Network in Derry on Nov. 23rd 2011.

The meeting was chaired by a local author and historian, Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh, a co-founder of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in 1967. He was flanked on the platform by Kate and Linda Nash, whose brother, William (19), was killed and whose father was wounded on reaching his dying son, to offer aid and comfort. Also in the audience was a spokesman for those wounded and injured, and a brother of Ranger Best, a Derry-born serving British soldier who was killed by the Official IRA, on May, 21, 1972.

Amongst those who spoke in favour of the 'March for Justice', was Helen Deery, whose brother Manus, was killed a day earlier. She has arranged to carry the main 'March for Justice' banner alongside Ranger William Best's brother or sister, on January 29th in Derry. Both families believe that

both brutal untimely deaths are connected, as many local people believe that Ranger Best was tortured and shot dead in retaliation for Manus Derry's murder, a day earlier, by the British Army.

This initiative shows the great spirit of this oppressed community; the historical injustice of 30/1/1972 and the cover-ups still rankles and inspires today's struggles —Beir Bua! Vinceremos!

### Colin Duffy, NOT GUILTY!! Brian Shivers found guilty of Massereene Operation by British Diplock judge

Independent Republican News 20 January 2012, <http://www.ir-news.net/>

Magherafelt man Brian Shivers has been found guilty of carrying out the fatal gun attack which claimed the lives of two soldiers at Massereene Army barracks in Antrim in March 2009 – while prominent republican Colin Duffy walks free. On Friday, Diplock judge Mr Justice Anthony Hart told Antrim Crown Court: "I am satisfied that the prosecution has proved beyond reasonable doubt that Shivers set fire to the Cavalier at Ranaghan Road and I therefore find him guilty on each count on the indictment."

But, while the judge was satisfied that Mr Duffy's DNA was found on a seat belt buckle of the car used by the Massereene gunmen and on a latex glove tip, he ruled that the prosecution had failed to link the 44-year-old to alleged RIRA attack. "I consider that there is insufficient evidence to satisfy me beyond reasonable doubt that, whatever Duffy may have done when he wore the latex glove or touched the seatbelt buckle, meant that he was preparing the car in some way for this murderous attack," Mr Justice Hart said, "And I therefore find him not guilty."

It is the second time Duffy has been cleared of murder, after his conviction over the IRA killing of a former soldier nearly 20 years ago was later quashed. There has been an ongoing offensive against Colin by the British security forces since



**Colin Duffy walks free with his family, Brian Shivers given life. Our sympathies to Brian and his family in this terrible time for them.**

they attempted to murder him in March 1990 where undercover British agents murdered his friend Sam Marshall and attempted to murder a third man, Tony McCaughey. That attack took place just moments after the three men had signed bail at Lurgan RUC barracks.

Both Duffy and Shivers had been charged with the murders of Sappers Mark Quinsey, and Patrick Azimkar, who died outside Massereene barracks on March 7 2009. The soldiers, along with their 38 Engineers regiment, were due to be deployed to Afghanistan early the next day.

Both accused also faced further charges over the attempted murders of five other people caught up in the shooting – two soldiers, two pizza delivery men and an armed security guard – and with possession of a weapon and ammunition with intent to endanger life. Duffy and Shivers both denied all the charges against them throughout their trial. The gun attack, which came just two days after then PSNI Chief Constable Sir Hugh Orde confirmed the threat from republicans in Northern Ireland was at critical level, was later claimed by the Real IRA.

**Despite all the inquiries from Widgery to Saville no one was convicted of the murders seen on the TV screens of the world and no one will be prosecuted. No one was held responsible apart from the murderers themselves, not the senior Army commanders, who ordered it and least of all not Ted Heath who undoubtedly gave the go-ahead for the action or Jack Lynch, Irish Taoiseach who effectively asked for it by requesting Heath to stop the demonstrations.**

## Letter to The Kilkenny People

28<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Dear Editor

What is the Kilkenny People 18/11/11 doing paying homage to men and women from Kilkenny who fought for, killed for and died for the British armed forces. British colonialism, British Imperialism and the British Empire?

The same British army that put down in blood the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, executing the seven signatories to the Irish Proclamation. James Connolly, badly injured in the fighting in the GPO, had to be tied to a chair because he couldn't stand before being executed by a British firing squad. The same British army, including the notorious Black & Tans, terrorised the Irish people in the War of Independence 1919 - 1921.

They shot unarmed people burned Cork and other towns and were aided and abetted by the RIC who were mainly Irish and Catholic but that didn't stop them collaborating with the Crown forces. We cannot forget of course the hundreds of years of repression, abuse, discrimination, terrorism, massacres, famines and evictions and every kind of exploitation and oppression known to man.

To me, any Irish person who joins the British armed forces is not just a traitor to his own country and people but an active collaborator with all the terrible deeds carried out by British Imperialism, in Ireland, India, Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Libya, Oman, Aden, Cyprus, Malay, Afghanistan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand to name but a few countries where British Imperialism caused the deaths of countless millions of oppressed and exploited peoples.

The British run slave trade forcibly took 28 million Africans in chains, leg irons and shackles to the West Indies and America to work as slaves on the British owned plantations. The same, if not worse, went for Irish slaves. King James II and Charles I led a continued effort to enslave the Irish. Britain's Oliver Cromwell furthered this practice of dehumanizing one's next door neighbour. The Irish slave trade began when James II sold 30,000 Irish prisoners as slaves to the New World. His Proclamation of 1625 required Irish political prisoners be sent overseas and sold to English settlers in the West Indies.

By the mid 1600s, the Irish were the main slaves sold to Antigua and Montserrat. At that time, 70% of the total population of Montserrat were Irish slaves. Ireland quickly became the biggest source of human livestock for English merchants. The majority of the early slaves to the New World were actually white. From 1641 to 1652, over 500,000 Irish were killed by the English and another 300,000 were sold as slaves. During the 1650s, over 100,000 Irish children between the ages of 10 and 14 were taken from their parents and sold as slaves in the West Indies, Virginia and New England. Ireland's population fell from about 1,500,000 to 600,000 in one single decade. Families were ripped apart as the British did not allow Irish fathers to take their wives and children with them across the Atlantic. This led to a helpless population of homeless women and children. Britain's solution was to auction them off as well. None of the Irish victims ever made it back to their

homeland to describe their ordeal.

In Kenya in the early 1950s the British Colonial powers forced Kenyan farmers off the best land and replaced them with white settlers from England. This resulted in the Kenyan Independence movement and the Mau Mau fighting for the return of their land and for independence from Britain.

In the struggle 300,000 Kikuyu people were killed by the British. Mothers and daughters were raped by British soldiers, men were castrated, detainees eyes were gouged out. The British tortured men and women by sticking metal objects up women's vaginas and men's rectums. Oil was poured on detainees who were then set alight. These were some of the tortures and crimes against humanity carried out by the British on the Kenyan freedom fighters. One and a half million Kikuyu were interned behind barbed wire with watch towers and sentries and anyone trying to escape would be shot dead or recaptured and tortured. In Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya the British bombed, killed, tortured and abused countless thousands of innocent people.

The British soldiers from Kilkenny who fought in 1914 are no different to today's British soldiers. They all fought for, killed for and died for British Imperialism and the Capitalist ruling class. The British armed forces are the sworn enemy of the British working class and of all oppressed and exploited nations and peoples.

I am dumbfounded that Kilkenny Borough Council are to 'honour' with a memorial all the Kilkenny men and women who fought for the British Army. What next? A memorial to the Black & Tans, in the same way that retired Gardai are seeking permission from the Government to erect a monument in Glasnevin Cemetery to 500 members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, including the Black and Tans, who were killed in the War of Independence? There are some Irish people it seems who are still proud to have served in the British Army and are unaware or indifferent or blind to its bloody history. I cannot imagine the British commemorating a British man or woman who fought for Germany against the British. It would never happen.

To add insult to injury, a front page article in the Kilkenny People (28/10/11) talked about a possible visit to Kilkenny City next year by Charles and Camilla. The tone of the article was deferential, slave-like and fawning towards the feudal and parasitic next in line to the English throne. How can the people of Kilkenny in the present economic climate waste money on the Commander in Chief of the British Parachute Regiment, notorious for the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry in January 1972, when 14 unarmed civil rights marchers were murdered by these British Paras, who also murdered 11 Nationalists in Ballymurphy in Belfast in August 1971. Not forgetting the murder of 12 yr old Majella O'Hare by a Para in May 1976 on her way to confession.

There are still 5,000 British troops in Ireland upholding British Imperialism's claim to and occupation of the six north eastern counties of Ireland.

## THE GENTLE BLACK AND TAN

Come all you staunch revisionists  
And listen to my song.  
It's short and it's unusual  
And it won't detain you long.  
It's all about a soldier  
Who has carried history's can,  
Who dodged Tom Barry and Dan Breen  
The gentle Black and Tan.

'Twas the curse of unemployment  
That drove him to our shore.  
His jacket black and trousers tan  
Like a badge of shame he wore.  
"Subdue the rebel Irish  
And shoot them when you can!"  
"May God forgive me if I do."  
Prayed the gentle Black and Tan.

The burning of Cork city  
Was indeed a mighty blaze.  
The jewellers' shops were gutted  
Not before the spoils were shared.  
Gold and silver ornaments,  
Rings and watches for each man,  
"But I only struck the matches,"  
Said the gentle Black and Tan.

Croke Park and Bloody Sunday  
Was our hero's greatest test.  
The spectators on the terraces  
Nigh impossible to miss.  
With salt tears his eyes were blinded  
And down his cheeks they ran,  
So he only shot Mick Hogan  
The gentle Black and Tan.



So take heed you blinkered Nationalists  
Fair warning take from me.  
If you want to live in safety  
And keep this land at sea.  
Take heed of our three heroes  
Murphy, Edwards and Yer Man,  
Who will sing the fame and clear the name  
Of the gentle Black and Tan.

By Breandan O hÉithir

We have the Kilkenny People newspaper welcoming a member of the British Ruling class to the city who supports and defends that occupation.

Charles' pal, the Marquis of Hartington, the heir to the Duke of Devonshire's estate in Lismore, Co Waterford, 'owns' the fishing rights to the River Blackwater which runs through 'his' land, and any Irish person who would dare to fish the river would soon be arrested by the police, taken to court and fined for having the guts to challenge an archaic and feudal law that allows an absentee landlord to prevent Irish people fishing an Irish river. As the Christy Moore song says "Only our rivers run free". The West Brit constituency were overjoyed when the feudal and parasitic Liz paid a visit earlier this year and will be salivating at the prospect of a second 'Royal' visit! Shoneenism,\* deference, forelock tugging and cap doffing are still very much present in today's bankrupt Ireland where the Celtic tiger once lived but alas is now dead.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, the vast majority of people in Ireland will continue to pay the price for the capitalist crisis. Neither capitalism nor politicians can offer a solution or way out from this crisis except to put almost half a million on the dole, force tens of thousands to emigrate, cut services, cut child benefit, cut the dole and attack the poor and vulnerable. But no fear, the bankers, the well paid politicians, judiciary, the President, the chief executives and directors of private and public companies, the trade union bureaucrats, and the well paid and well fed media commentators are laughing all the way to the bank. For the privileged and well heeled there is no crisis, only the working class, the poor, the sick, the vulnerable and the unemployed know and understand the real meaning of the crisis because they live it 24/7.

Yours Sincerely Charlie Walsh, Pimlico, London.

\* An Irishman who imitates English ways; from Gaelic Seoinín, diminutive of Seon, John, a typical English name.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

# Dale Farm Irish Travellers (Pavees) fight on By Tony Fox

**P**hien O'Reachtigan spoke strongly on behalf of the Irish travellers (Pavees) in Dale Farm at the Labour Representation Committee AGM. He pointed out that they have been in this country for 900 years. "They keep telling us to go back where we came from. We are part of Britain. If all people were to go back to their original countries we would all go back to Africa. Our ancestors left there and they were all travellers once."

He wrote of the eviction of the Dale Farm residents on 19 October,

"I was at the site on the day of the eviction and for a week after, until it became impossible to stay. The truth of the matter is the people bought a scrap yard and turned it into a home for 400 people, men women and children and there we stayed for 10 long years until the Tories in the Coalition finally got around to us. Approximately £22 million later and the land is reminiscence of no man's land, deep craters like shell holes litter the 5 acres. The council, via its bailiffs, have destroyed not only the homes of the people, but the very plots they lived on. In some plots they have dug down maybe 8 or 9 feet, but they have only gone this deep on plots that people are allowed to be on, they have also built up mounds of earth 8 feet high to stop these people from legally accessing their land.

The council have stood by if not ordered the bailiffs to crack and break the sewer pipes, to dig up the water pipes. Both leak and fill the crater holes. The people told the council and the press and the world they had nowhere to go and the proof of that is they now remain crowded onto the 'legal' side of the site while those who can not fit in this camp are on the little bit of remaining road of the 'illegal' side. Some face the holes that was once their plots. While the council maintains this wasn't a spiteful eviction stating the law has to be the same for everyone they conveniently ignore that when it comes to planning law the Travellers have 90% of their application rejected against 20% of non-traveller application, which would suggest inequality!

This very same council with the local press orchestrated a rumour the people of Dale Farm had houses in Ireland, something they with all their investigative clout have never been able to prove other than with sly innuendo and a nudge nudge wink wink attitude. It must be clear if the people did have such property they are ignoring it and have done since the 19 October to spend the time and Christmas on a piece of muddy road, facing a bomb site overrun by rats, and the smell of raw sewage from the local area polluting their caravans, their clothes their very lives. The council are well aware of this but they hope this misery will make the owners of the land leave so they, the council, can put a claim

against the land by sending costs for the eviction to the empty site, thereby getting no reply and thus in law able to acquire the land. This bit of land spoiled and contaminated by the actions of the council is the only home the people have and thus they stay around it like refugees worldwide remain in their destroyed villages. The Dale farm people are now internal refugees in this county, their community, their home has been torn asunder in the name of planning law, yet they remain in the debris.

Phien O'Reachtigan Pavee Advise Assist Direct (PAAD)

Press release: 20 December 2011, Traveller Solidarity Network: <http://travellersolidarity.org/> For comment call: 07040900905, 07583761462

Dale Farm supporters reject police cautions for obstruction Today (20 December 2011) and yesterday, over thirty Dale Farm supporters who were arrested during the Dale Farm eviction rejected police cautions for obstruction of a bailiff under the Town and Country Planning Act. They now face a court hearing in the new year.

A number of the supporters issued a joint statement: "We stand by our decision to attempt to prevent the brutal forced eviction that took place. It has left Dale Farm a wasteland, with 83 families homeless and living in inhumane conditions. The cynical use of greenbelt planning laws does not change the fact that this was a racially motivated eviction by Basildon Council. We believe that the eviction was unjust and therefore our actions were justified; we cannot accept 'guilt' for standing side by side with the Dale Farm community."

Mary O'Brien, a member of the Dale Farm community, said "Nobody has ever stood up in history for Travelling people. And Dale Farm comes along, and we had people, really good settled people, that stood up for us. I'll never forget that, and my people will never forget that. We lost our homes, but it made history."

Media enquiries: 07040900905, 07583761462 Twitter: @travellersol <http://travellersolidarity.org/> Please email [tsn-media@noflag.org.uk](mailto:tsn-media@noflag.org.uk) to be added to our press

## Report on the Dublin-based traveller support unit Pavee Point's International involvement

Pavee Point's decision to advocate for Travellers rights internationally, rather than in Ireland, is a definitive feature of its operations. As phrased in the 2003-05 tri-annual report: "Our rationale



Phien O'Reachtigan speaking at the Labour Representation Committee AGM on 19 November 2011

for this work is that many of the problems that Irish Travellers face, such as racism, exist outside of the country and are unlikely to be resolved at a national level alone." Working internationally has allowed PP to network with other minority groups, learn new strategies for activism, and to get Traveller rights issues into the current dialogue on international human rights.

In 2003, the Council of Europe invited PP to attend two conferences as an expert on and representative of the Traveller community. At the second seminar on 'Challenges for Cooperation and Integration between Roma and Travellers and local and Regional Authorities', Pavee Point representatives were given the opportunity to speak to an international audience.

In 2004, the European Roma and Traveller Forum was formed after 10 years of careful deliberation. PP is a founding member of the forum, and is represented by Martin Collins. Along with two other delegates, Collins will form the official voice for the Irish Traveller ethnic group at a European level.

In 2004, PP submitted a Shadow Report to UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The Irish government had already sent a report of its own that included the fact that it would not acknowledge Travellers as an ethnic minority group.

Pavee Point contested the Irish Government's refusal to recognize Travellers as an ethnic group. In their CERD report, PP described the government's actions as closed-minded and reprehensible- and not without negative ramifications for settled-Traveller relations. In 2005, Pavee Point was represented in CERD's hearing on Ireland.

The Traveller & Roma Action for Implementation of Legal & Equality Rights (TRAILER) Project was formed by five countries to aid in the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation. PP is the representative organization for Ireland.



# We are not the 99%

By Ella Downing

## Polemics on consensus

Occupy movements have sprung up all over the world attracting large swathes of society, and while we see homeless people, the unemployed, regular workers through to concerned clergy, hippies and even disaffected bankers affiliating themselves with this trend it is largely middle-class in character, at least in Britain and Ireland anyway.

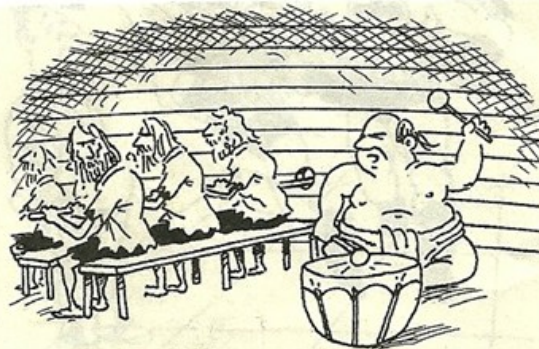
We have posters reading 'Reform Now!' and projections telling us to 'Occupy your mind!'. There is a strong bent towards education, with a library and 'tent university' at St Paul's. They even have a regular newspaper, 'The Occupy Times'. General assemblies are held: everyone with a right to speak, some on the left could learn here, and democratic votes are held to solidify positions. Anti-violence is key, as the protesters seem to be on the whole very media savvy and PR aware. But how dedicated are these protesters to the eradication of poverty? Is their cleverness and education of the right sort, and are they really the 99%?

This media-relations side to things is telling: the prevailing hope is that through being inoffensive they can convince an electorate of their position, which will in turn sway the government (their suggested vehicle for change) which will then start behaving itself properly. Little need be said about the fruitlessness of this liberal and reformist approach.

In Leeds however public relations took on a darker note, as when someone offered the Occupy Movement there a wood-burning heater, it was rejected for fear it would attract the homeless. Whilst we wish upon these people the most profound frost-bite, it is indicative of a certain mode of thought. In some ways these protests are analogous with the punk movement, once the middle-class discovers something they begin to believe they invented it and then quickly set about cleaning it up, sanitising it into New Wave. The roots of protest can be found in class conflict and the working-class have made it what it is today; a tool which promotes solidarity, a mechanism for raising class-consciousness and massive bloody megaphone. The middle-class may borrow use this, of course, but we still retain the accreditation.

So far so harmless, but danger lurks. When the middle-class claims to be the majority, watch

out! Class consciousness is severely lacking in #Occupy: a person distributing a paper claims that we're all working-class now, an inversion of the often bandied about New-Labourish idea that the working class no longer exists in this country, 'we're all middle-class now'. The former sentiment is born of bust times and the latter of boom, but both are unremittably ne-



*"Stop moaning, we're all in the same boat"*

With such a broad range of ideas and opinions it becomes awkward to offer a critique of this trend as it manifests itself in these Isles, one minute someone suggests we 'grow our own future' and the next that a Rothschild lizard blew up the twin towers as a double-indemnity insurance scam.

glectful of vital social distinctions. A poster reads 'Tahrir Square', as though these protesters are facing the same challenges and are fighting the same fight as those brave Egyptians. The problem is that the squeezed middle does not face the same challenges as workers here and abroad, and whilst they are actively trying to avoid becoming working class, they arguably do not see the situation of working class people worldwide as unacceptable, but merely see that situation as unacceptable for themselves.

When they talk for us, they have their own interests to look out for, and we know all too well from the lessons of history how quickly and viciously the middle-class can swing to the right. Herein, for example, lay the roots of fascism. Low and behold, our man Trotsky has something to say on the matter in "Thälmann and the 'People's Revolution'" -

*Now the new turn: the people's revolution instead of the proletarian revolution. The fascist Strasser [leader of the 'left' Nazis] says 95 percent of the people are interested in the revolution, consequently it is not a class revolution but a people's revolution. Thälmann [German Stalinist leader] sings in chorus. In reality, the worker-Communist should say to the fascist worker: of course, 95 percent of the population, if not 98 percent, is exploited by finance capital. But this exploitation is organized hierarchically.*

He goes on to explain that the middle-class are what we might class sub-exploiters, or sub-subexploiters.

Events unfold, Otto Strasser was the 'workers representative' in the German fascist movement. His 'left-wing' faction, which included Joseph Goebbels, was in favour of strikes, nationalising the banks and industry, was not anti-Semitic, admired Stalin and wanted to ally with the Soviet Union. He was expelled from the NSDAP by Hitler in 1930, his brother Gregor was killed and his faction wiped out in the Night of the Long Knives in 1934. Hitler then became the undisputed party leader.

The subsequent demonization of the working-class and its organisations becomes entrenched, and minorities were scapegoated in the most staggering manner. (As a side note, there is practically nothing said in defence of Muslims against the ever-growing acceptability of Islamophobia by this movement, apparently it is not a key enough issue). What is evident however, and which seems to be sneaking into lefty news outlets, is this false notion of 'the people', Stalinist in tone and mis-educated in content. As any fool knows - we're not all in the same boat, and it's frankly insulting to suggest we are.

With such a broad range of ideas and opinions it becomes awkward to offer a critique of this trend as it manifests itself in these Isles, one minute someone suggests we 'grow our own future' and the next that a Rothschild lizard blew up the twin towers as a double-indemnity insurance scam. But the character of the thing as a whole is middle-class, probably the better part of this entity, perhaps exemplified by their sterling organisational skills. We cannot let them speak for us however, for not only does it rob the true majority of a voice, but also misrepresents our interests. Note that the Glasgow Occupiers have now declared themselves not anti-Capitalist at all and in Dublin members of the far right have been spotted acting as stewards.

Censorship should always be approached with utmost caution, because the old adage 'I may not agree with what you're saying, but I'll defend your right to say it' is defiantly in play here. These are on the whole nice people with good intentions, despite being ultimately clueless.

Maybe in this light it's lucky that this movement is going nowhere quick, because occupying a park is hardly the strategy of the century, this thing is not Tiananmen Square, and it's definitely no industrial strike action. In short I suggest that when a middle-class person from this movement invites you to occupy your own mind, nod and smile, suggest some reading material, but find something better to occupy yourself with instead.

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**

# How Engels "On Authority" answers the Occupy movement's hostility to the organised working class

By the Liga Comunista of Brazil

It is 191 years this November 28 since the birth of one of the biggest giants of revolutionary thought and action that humanity and the class struggle has ever produced, Frederick Engels.

After his friend Karl Marx (who died in 1883), Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat in the whole civilised world. From the time that fate brought Karl Marx and Frederick Engels together, the two friends devoted their life's work to a common cause. And so to understand what Frederick Engels has done for the proletariat, one must have a clear idea of the significance of Marx's teaching and work for the development of the contemporary working-class movement. Marx and Engels were the first to show that the working class and its demands are a necessary outcome of the present economic system, which together with the bourgeoisie inevitably creates and organises the proletariat. They showed that it is not the well-meaning efforts of noble-minded individuals, but the class struggle of the organised proletariat that will deliver humanity from the evils which now oppress it.

In their scientific works, Marx and Engels were the first to explain that socialism is not the invention of dreamers, but the final aim and necessary result of the development of the productive forces in modern society. All recorded history hitherto has been a history of class struggle, of the succession of the rule and victory of certain social classes over others. And this will continue until the foundations of class struggle and of class domination – private property and anarchic social production – disappear. The interests of the proletariat demand the destruction of these foundations, and therefore the conscious class struggle of the organised workers must be directed against them. Every class struggle is a political struggle. (Friedrich Engels, v. i. Lenin, 1895). For over a century Marxists have fought pacifism and abstentionism as bourgeois ideologies that make workers' class struggle impotent, but little has been said about the practice of proceeding by 100% consent and therefore we will deal more specifically with this crucial issue.

Marx and Engels advocated that the Communists fight for immediate goals and working-class interests that they represent and defend the movement's future. And for this, highlighted Engels, it was necessary to know the proletariat,

*The condition of the working-class is the real basis and point of departure of all social movements of the present because it is the highest and most unconcealed pinnacle of the social misery existing in our day. French and German working-class Communism are its direct, Fourierism and English Socialism, as well as the Communism of the German educated bourgeoisie, are its indirect products. A knowledge of proletarian conditions is absolutely necessary to be able to*

*provide solid ground for socialist theories, on the one hand, and for judgments about their right to exist, on the other; and to put an end to all sentimental dreams and fancies pro and con.*

(The Condition of the Working Class in England, Frederick Engels, 1845).

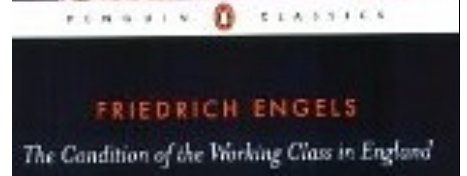
Today, where we see major movements governed by youth from Cairo to London, from Athens to Wall Street, which are led by degenerate opportunist parties (Social Democrats and Stalinists) and centrists (pseudo-Trotskyists), imbued with concepts which are not even at the level of liberal radicalism; anarchism itself is a variant of neo-autonomist nonsense. Although we know that this is not a homogeneous group, the demonstrators in Tahrir square and Occupy Wall Street differ from the indignando Spaniards who in turn, have little in common with the youth that shook the streets of London and that between them are also they are very heterogeneous, we highlight some common traits that stand out among the rest. Among these basic principles are the anti-politics, consensus decision-making (against the method of working democracy majority decision) and non-violence.

## The reactionary fetish of consensual decisions

On the face of it the anti-authoritarian, pacifists and horizontalists are have more in common with the best traditions of the organization that led the proletariat to victory in the past than with the bourgeois order. But it is a sterile aversion planted in new generations against the building of a revolutionary authority to win the masses in the struggles; we must realise our most important historical tasks is to direct all social conflicts toward the emancipation of the proletariat. It is an antidote inoculated by the ideology of bourgeois democratic reaction that freezes the development of the consciousness of youth, diverting all their defiance to political impotence against the constitution of the Revolutionary Party and the violent seizure of power by the masses. Just see the question of the sacred cow of "consensus".

The following quote from Murray Bookchin's "What is Communalism? The Democratic Dimensions of Anarchism" (1) spells it out well,

*I do not deny that consensus may be an appropriate form of decision-making in small groups of people who are thoroughly familiar with one another. But to examine consensus in practical terms, my own experience has shown me that when larger groups try to make decisions by consensus, it usually obliges them to arrive at the lowest common intellectual denominator in their decision-making: the least controversial or even the most mediocre decision that a sizable assembly of people can attain is adopted -- precisely because everyone must agree with it or else*



*withdraw from voting on that issue. More disturbingly, I have found that it permits an insidious authoritarianism and gross manipulations -- even when used in the name of autonomy or freedom.*

This consensus ends up by silencing vital aspects of conflict; passionate dialogue and dissent. When it decides by a majority, the defeated minority can resolve to reverse a disastrous decision for the collective through persistent articulation of openly disagreeing with potentially persuasive fundamental arguments. The consensus, in turn, will the minority to silence it in favour of a "metaphysical consensus" group. It suppresses the creative role of dissent and its value as a democratic phenomenon tends to disappear in the grey uniformity required by consensus. Anybody of libertarian ideas aimed at dissolving the hierarchy, the classes, domination and exploitation, ends up being a hostage of the dictatorship of the lowest common denominator against the vanguard who are more aware of the fight or are subjected to duress of a minority that blocks decision-making by a majority of a collective. On the other hand, you could create a dictatorship of a minority to sabotage any collective decision, suppress the dialectic of struggle of ideas that develops in the confrontation of the opposition and situation, leading the movement to an ideological cemetery.

This methodology is totally undemocratic, because it does not allow decisions by simple majority. It is all based on individual bourgeois rights as opposed to the collective methods of workers struggle, above all, the fight for enforcing their historical interests through the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of a hierarchi-

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

cally centred Bolshevik-type party. These methods and revolutionary class interests are more hated by these movements than they are "outraged" by the capitalists.

This methodology emphasised "outrage" that is they are hostage to bourgeois trends in the youth and prevent such bourgeois movements combining with the struggle of the working class. After all, how to pass days and week camping in the middle of squares and at the same time organise the fight for control of production in the workplace by attacking the capitalist where it hurts, in the pocket? This fashion juxtaposes individualism to the organisation of the proletariat as a militant Bolshevik-type party based on democratic centralism. This is the only international instruments that can reverse the correlation of forces which today favour imperialist reaction.

So we recommend Engels to the struggles of new generations! This youth is malformed by ideological counter-revolutionary anti-communist reaction and, born after the end of the USSR under a massive bombardment of the most reactionary conceptions; individualism and the dregs of capitalist barbarism. They are demoralised by the historical betrayals of traditional goals of the mass movement. In order to refresh our memory of the fight within the mass movement against the individualist bourgeois influences we reproduce one of the most important texts of revolutionary Marxism ever written on the topic.

## Friedrich Engels "On Authority"

A number of socialists have latterly launched a

**We print below "On Authority" by Friedrich Engels, written between October 1872 and March 1873 and published first in Italy in December 1873. In refuting arguments raised by anarchists and echoed by some socialists, Engels pointed to the experience of the Paris Commune of March-May 1871, when the proletariat briefly governed the city before being crushed by the French army with the support of German forces, with over 20,000 slaughtered. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, described the Paris Commune as the first historical expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat—i.e., a workers state.**

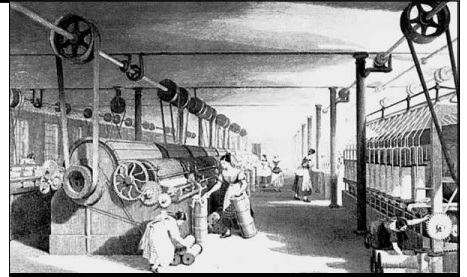
regular crusade against what they call the principle of authority. It is sufficient for them to say that this or that act is authoritarian for it to be condemned. This summary mode of procedure is being abused to such an extent that it has become necessary to look into the matter somewhat more closely. Authority, in the sense in which the word is used here, means: the imposition of the will of another upon ours; on the other hand, authority presupposes subordination. Now, since these two words sound bad and the relationship which they represent is disagreeable to the subordinated party, the question is to ascertain whether there is any way of dispensing with it, whether—given the condi-

tions of present-day society—we could not create another social system, in which this authority would be given no scope any longer and would consequently have to disappear. On examining the economic, industrial and agricultural conditions which form the basis of present-day bourgeois society, we find that they tend more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals. Modern industry with its big factories and mills, where hundreds of workers supervise complicated machines driven by steam, has superseded the small workshops of the separate producers; the carriages and wagons of the highways have been substituted by railway trains, just as the small schooners and sailing feluccas have been by steam-boats. Even agriculture falls increasingly under the dominion of the machine and of steam, which slowly but relentlessly put in the place of the small proprietors big capitalists, who with the aid of hired workers cultivate vast stretches of land. Everywhere combined action, the complication of processes dependent upon each other, displaces independent action by individuals. But whoever mentions combined action speaks of organisation; now, is it possible to have organisation without authority?

Supposing a social revolution dethroned the capitalists, who now exercise their authority over the production and circulation of wealth. Supposing, to adopt entirely the point of view of the anti-authoritarians, that the land and the instruments of labour had become the collective property of the workers who use them. Will authority have disappeared or will it only have changed its form? Let us see.

Let us take by way of example a cotton spinning mill. The cotton must pass through at least six successive operations before it is reduced to the state of thread, and these operations take place for the most part in different rooms. Furthermore, keeping the machines going requires an engineer to look after the steam engine, mechanics to make the current repairs, and many other labourers whose business it is to transfer the products from one room to another, and so forth. All these workers, men, women and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy.

The workers must, therefore, first come to an understanding on the hours of work; and these hours, once they are fixed, must be observed by all, without any exception. Thereafter particular questions arise in each room and at every moment concerning the mode of production, distribution of materials, etc., which must be settled at once on pain of seeing all production immediately stopped; whether they are settled by decision of a delegate placed at the head of each branch of labour or, if possible, by a majority vote, the will of the single individual will always have to subordinate itself, which means that questions are settled in an authoritarian way. The automatic machinery of the big factory is much more despotic than the small capitalists who employ workers ever have been. At least



**All these workers, men, women and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy.**

with regard to the hours of work one may write upon the portals of these factories: *Lasciate ogni autonomia, voi che entrate!* (Leave all autonomy behind, ye that enter here!). (2) If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him by subjecting him, in so far as he employs them, to a veritable despotism independent of all social organisation. Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel.

Let us take another example—the railway. Here, too, the co-operation of an infinite number of individuals is absolutely necessary, and this co-operation must be practised during precisely fixed hours so that no accidents may happen. Here, too, the first condition of the job is a dominant will that settles all subordinate questions, whether this will is represented by a single delegate or a committee charged with the execution of the resolutions of the majority of persons interested. In either case there is very pronounced authority. Moreover, what would happen to the first train dispatched if the authority of the railway employees over the Hon. passengers were abolished?

But the necessity of authority, and of imperious authority at that, will nowhere be found more evident than on board a ship on the high seas. There, in time of danger, the lives of all depend on the instantaneous and absolute obedience of all to the will of one.

When I submitted arguments like these to the most rabid anti-authoritarians the only answer they were able to give me was the following: Yes, that's true, but here it is not a case of authority which we confer on our delegates, but of a commission entrusted! These gentlemen think that when they have changed the names of things they have changed the things themselves. This is how these profound thinkers mock at the whole world.

We have thus seen that, on the one hand, a certain authority, no matter how delegated, and, on the other hand, a certain subordination, are things which, independently of all social organisation, are imposed upon us together with the material conditions under which we produce and make products circulate.

We have seen, besides, that the material condi-

tions of production and circulation inevitably develop with large-scale industry and large-scale agriculture, and increasingly tend to enlarge the scope of this authority. Hence it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good. Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society. If the autonomists confined themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the world.

Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon—authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the

bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough? Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction.

(1) Murray Bookchin "What is Communalism? The Democratic Dimensions of Anarchism" [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/bookchin/cmmnl2.mcw.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/bookchin/cmmnl2.mcw.html)

(2) Ye who enter here abandon all autonomy! - This is a parallel to the original text of Dante Alighieri, the Divine Comedy. Dante and Virgil arrive at the entrance of hell and read this haunting inscription, "Lasciate ogne portal: speranza, voi ch intrate". "Abandon All Hope, Ye Who Enter Here".

## Imperialism out of Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Iran! LCFI

### For the victory of the peoples of the Middle East and Central Asia and the defeat of imperialism!

**1. The only way out of the crisis of capitalist accumulation is by investing in the means of mass destruction.** The siege of the great imperialist powers for the re-conquest of Syria and Iran is tightening. The driving cause of this new military adventure is the need for imperialist political economy to develop their output of weapons of mass destruction to solve the public debt crisis of the metropolitan countries of the European Union and the USA. The goal is to 'leverage' the world economy that is now shrinking. A new war, whose amplitude is unpredictable so far, is on the horizon. The impending nuclear war is the proof of the deep senile parasitism of the capitalist system, which needs more and more wars to survive.

**2. Imperialism imposes its monopoly of violence on the planet.** Just as the bourgeois state imposes a monopoly of violence by force on society, imperialism imposes a monopoly of weapons of mass destruction around the globe. This is the second cause of the movement to war for the capitulation of Iran. Therefore, the U.S., the only country that used nuclear weapons against opponents, claims the right to be the only holder, directly or by means of their puppets (NATO, Israel, etc.) of weapons of mass destruction. Iran and Syria are semi-colonies that have governments that sponsor anti-imperialist guerrilla insurgency in the region and so increased their political influence in the last 10 years after the occupation of Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya.

**3. Furthermore, the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons destabilizes the correlation of forces in the Middle East and can frustrate their plans for re-colonization.** For this they must prevent Iran from enriching uranium to

90%. Imperialism has failed to disarm the North Korean workers' state; it has fissile material for nuclear weapons and medium-range ballistic missiles. In addition, the two largest workers' states of the twentieth century, Russia and China, have developed nuclear weapons. Under the auspices of imperialism, favoured by the cold war and the dispute between them, India and Pakistan also have nuclear weapons.

**4. Imperialism strives to put all countries under its control and they do not balk at practicing terrorism to assassinate scientists, as they have just done in Iran; thus they are preparing a bloodbath in Syria or Iran worse than of Libya.** Just as happened in the invasion of Iraq, the imperialist powers use the old mantra that the country represents a danger to the world by producing nuclear weapons.

**5. The race for the "black gold" (BLACK GOLD RUSH).** The third cause of war is the need completely to re-colonize the Middle East and Asia in order to exert control over the region with the greatest energy potential, (which is therefore also the most disputed) on the planet. Aided by the bourgeois world media, the U.S. and EU have devised a draconian oil embargo on Iran, in the hope that this will paralyze the country's important oil sector and force it to give up its nuclear program.

**6. Imperialism OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA!** Imperialism has managed to carry out its murderous enterprise against the peoples of the world because it was strengthened by the reaction against the world revolution engendered by the counter-revolutionary collapse of the USSR. Just look at the current global offensive of imperialism against the proletariat in various countries today. This has its greatest expressions in the 'Arab Spring', which despite having progressive contradictions as in Egypt, has enormously boosted imperialist domination in the Middle East.

**7. It is urgent that the proletariat head a revolutionary united front of oppressed people without nourishing the slightest confidence in bourgeois direction of Syria, Iran, Russia or bourgeois-bureaucratic rule in China.** The bourgeoisie is nowhere able to perform any consistent struggle against imperialism and for national emancipation. The nationalist bourgeoisie always strive to be minority partners in the exploitation of workers.

**8. The LCFI argues that the only political program that can now offer a progressive strategy against the re-colonisation of the world and against the nuclear massacre of the Iranian population is the program of the Fourth International.** We are for reconstructing the only body capable of overcoming the biggest historical obstacle in the path of the working masses - the crisis of revolutionary leadership - the LCFI fights for the reconstruction of the only force which can achieve the emancipation of the working class worldwide!

- All support the Syrian and Iranian resistance as well as all the oppressed peoples of the Middle East!

- We defend the right of Iran, North Korea and any semi-colonial country to arm themselves including with nuclear weapons, to deter Imperialist aggression. We are for workers control of these weapons and support the right of the proletariat to arm itself to defeat Imperialist aggression

- Down with imperialism in Iran, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti!

**Liga Comunista—Brasil**

**Tendencia Militante Bolchevique—Argentina**

**Socialist Fight—Britain**

15 January 2012

See full statement here, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/79319831/Imperialism-out-of-Iraq-Afghanistan-Syria-and-Iran-LCFI>



## Death of Kim Jong Il; Defend the North Korean Deformed Workers State!

**Fighting capitalist restoration, building the revolutionary party to defend the gains, for democratic workers control of the whole country.**

by Folha do Trabalhador # 5, December 2011

(The Liga Comunista of Brazil produces Folha)

**N**orth Korea announced the death of its leader Kim Jong Il on December 21. Immediately the capitalist world media treated it with a mixture of pleasure and pressure. Pleasure for the death of an enemy leader, pressure to take advantage of that weakness to demand the restoration of capitalism. This is what is at stake in this country alone and against the powerful weapons which are pointed in the U.S., Japan and South Korea

North Korea is a very different nation to all others. At the end of World War II (1945) Koreans expelled the Japanese troops who occupied the country since the early twentieth century. This victory encouraged them to do away with capitalism in the whole peninsula promoting agrarian reform and creating "popular committees" against the bourgeoisie.

But the U.S. had aspirations to replace the Japanese imperialism in Asia. The war was practically won already after the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to intimidate the Soviet Union and decimate the Japanese working class and so make revolution impossible. As they did with Germany which they divided between East and West, the USA and USSR divided North and South Korea between them but artificial division that has not prevented the continuation of class struggle. The popular committees were overwhelmed by the troops of UN sponsored Imperial in the South but the ones in the northern peninsula pressed their bureaucratic leadership linked the USSR to break with and expropriate the bourgeoisie. Despite having consciously betrayed the Korean revolu-

tion by refusing to wield their veto against the UN sponsoring the invasion of the country, they also needed to enforce a cordon against imperialism in its Eastern borders.

The war was suspended in 1953 but the South Korean workers remain continuously intoxicated with lies by the media to believe that their main enemies was their brothers and sisters in the north and not the bosses who exploit them in factories such as Samsung, LG, Hyundai Kia. This 'security' is ultimately controlled by the large U.S. military contingent in the country.

With the demise of capitalism and private property in the northern state, the whole working population had a job, health, education and free housing. North Korea became a deformed workers state as demonstrated by this achievement and we defend it unconditionally including making a military front with the son of Kim Jong Il, the bureaucrat successor, Kim Jong-un, against external or internal attempts to restore capitalism in North Korea. The world working class is one body and every victory for it is a defeat of our bosses. However, after losing the war, the U.S. Did not give up. Just as they do with Cuba, the country underwent a violent economic blockade which caused shortages of food and energy in an attempt to force Korea to give up and restore capitalism and its super-profits.

The FDT is opposed to sanctions established by imperialism to strangle the small Asian country and defends the right of Korea to develop nuclear power to meet their energy weaknesses and also to defend themselves with nuclear weapons against the U.S. and its allies if necessary.

However, as in bureaucratized unions, the government of North Korea does not allow democracy for the majority of workers. The Korean Workers Party, the PTC, is a party bureaucracy that functions under cover as a TU bureaucracy, as an intermediate in the struggle between capi-



**In July 2000 Putin visited North Korea. The USSR did not use its veto in 1950 to prevent the invasion of Korea, giving the excuse that they were boycotting the UN for recognising Chiang Kai-shek's government whilst ignoring Mao. But nevertheless they recognised the value of a cordon against Imperialism.**

talists and workers to obtain parasitic privileges. This gradually weakens the North Korean workers' state as the TU bureaucrats weaken and demoralize our struggle in the unions.

Kim Jong Il, leader of the PTC was a bureaucrat, but we did not celebrate his death, as does the bourgeoisie and certain groups and pseudo-leftist parties who capitulate to the employers, because the death of a bureaucrat in itself does not result in the strengthening of the fight workers' power.

As with a union where the workers need to take control of the mafia bureaucratic policy in order to use it as an instrument of struggle against the employers, in North Korea or Cuba workers must organize themselves into a party independent of bureaucrats and make a proletarian political revolution to win control of the state by popular councils in order to use it to defend the conquests of the country, stop the restoration of capitalism and reunite all Korean workers North and South, expropriate the bosses and expelling imperialism.

## Facebook reactions to the stance of the SWP and the AWL on Libya

7 December 2011

**Mick Burke:** The SWP's Eamonn McCann excused the lynching of Colonel Gaddafi shortly after video clips of the Libyan leader's gruesome slaying appeared on the internet, "It may be a mitigating circumstance that the maiming and killing wasn't done in cold blood, but by fighters who had come through a welter of danger and may have been seized by frenzy at having Gaddafi in their clutches at last." The McCann article, originally published in the Belfast Telegraph, is also on the Irish Anti-War Movement (IAWM) website.

**Erik Andersson:** They're saying that they'll opt for the type of Sharia in Qatar. How lovely for

the 'liberated' women!

**Seamus Conway:** Some group called "Workers Liberty" were flogging their paper in Leeds recently and when I asked them where they stood on Libya I nearly passed out when they said they were with the so called "rebels", oblivious then to the NTC hatred of socialism, their racism and not least of all being in the pockets of the oil men and imperialism....? I couldn't believe it I really couldn't....from a supposed "socialist" group...they even had a picture of a woman waving a red flag on their paper...unbelievable...

**Ozaki Takami:** Seamus, the AWL must be one of the most pro-imperialist fake-left groups on the planet. They also support the imperialist occupation of Iraq.

**Seamus Conway:** that is EXACTLY the line of this bloke I bought a paper off....I couldn't believe what he was saying to me....it was the SAME as a NATO General would have come out with....full support for the "rebels"!! I couldn't

believe a so called "socialist" ANYWHERE would take THAT position.....I really couldn't... Liberated Libya!!".

And is Eamonn McCann on THIS PLANET if that is what he calls it???? Supposed "left" wing people taking the side of imperialism against the Libyan anti-imperialist forces is just incredible....are they doing this on purpose for some shock effect or is it some perverse "logic"... surely it's CRYSTAL CLEAR where socialists should stand on these issues...are they having a laugh or what....just what on Earth prompts so called "socialists" to take these INSANE positions???

**Ozaki Takami:** They do it in the name of absurd, abstract, supra-class and ultimately bogus "democracy".

**Gerald Joseph Downing:** And they do it to cultivate and develop their relationship with the TU bureaucracy, "the backbone of British Imperialism", even the Irish ones!

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**

# The Manifesto of the Luiza Mahim Collective (against special oppression) September 2007

## Special Oppression

The Luiza Mahim Collective was a collective for struggle against the sexism, racism and homophobia. It was built in Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ) by militants of the internationalist Communist Collective (CCI) and independent students, after a long campaign against racism at the University. We reproduce here its founding manifesto, because it contains a Communist program to combat special oppression.

### Hail the revolutionary struggle against sexism, racism and homophobia!

Worldwide, women, blacks, indigenous peoples and homosexuals make up the most oppressed of all workers. Mass unemployment, hunger, wars, ecological disasters (such as Hurricane Katrina [1] and the flooding in the baixada fluminense[2]) and other ills of capitalism attack mostly us. Capitalism needs to stimulate all kinds of prejudices and rivalries among the workers, because the disunity plays against each other. Sexism, racism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia etc. is exploited mainly in the workplace, for example, "ignoring" the value of housework and putting blacks primarily in poorly paid outsourced jobs, but also in all other social relationships

In Brazil, about half of the population comprises black people, and they receive approximately 40% less pay than white people. Women do not have guaranteed their basic rights, such as the public kindergartens, and suffer from the neoliberalism of the Lula Government, which even wants to do away with retirement. Homosexuals (gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered) have their sexuality commodified, when they are "lucky" enough to escape violence, pure and simple.

This situation has been aggravated in the current historic stage of the crisis, marked by the counter-revolution which ended with the fall of the Soviet Union. The great fights beginning in the 1960s (May 68 in France, Prague Spring, the Viet Nam Liberation etc) boosted the struggles of women, blacks and homosexuals. This led to the formation of groups like the Black Panthers and Gay Liberation Front. However the defeats of 1989-91 saw the re-emergence of everything from neo-Nazism, to fundamentalism and other such ideologies. In addition most organizations of oppressed sectors began to adapt to the system, becoming Non Government Organizations (NGOs) or became sold out by Governments.

Most of the left have never engaged with or have abandoned the discussion about these specific forms of capitalist oppression. Often these organizations said that organize these sectors was "dividing the class", or they just participated in "celebration days" as the March 8, the June 28 or November 20. For us, the result is the institutionalization of the left, its activity revolves around the parliamentary elections and trade unions, and their adaptation to the conscience of well paid

layers of the working class. It is impossible to build a revolutionary left without dealing with these issues inside the class struggles.

Therefore, we built the Luiza Mahim Collective. Luiza Mahim was a black woman, leader of the Malê Revolt, a major slave revolt in Salvador, 1835. [3] Her example shows that the struggle of women, blacks and homosexuals can only be successful if it is revolutionary. We are an independent collective, with a revolutionary socialist program, with the goal to combat sexism, racism and homophobia. Anyone who agrees with our program may participate, and join this fight.

### Program:

Against NGOs! NGOs are financed by the State and/or by companies, so do not have the independence to fight them. They substitute public services and promote outsourcing. Trade unions and social movements must organize the struggles of women, blacks and homosexuals

No confidence in the racist police! Against women's police units, which the State uses to criminalise workers by playing the machismo card! For the formation of self-defence in social movements against racism, violence against women and homophobia! We must remember the examples of the Black Panthers and the Stonewall uprising.

Open admissions![4] This demand by itself makes the fight for affirmative actions at university unnecessary. The fight for quotas has been used by the Government and by opportunistic sectors of the movement as a way of avoiding abolishing the vestibular. We cannot leave this watchword for the holidays! Where the quotas already exist, we must defend them in the face of racist attacks, which deny that there is racism in Brazil.

- Against outsourcing! Labor rights for all! The outsourcing is sexist and racist, because women and Blacks are the majority of workers without rights.
- To eliminate unemployment: reduction of the workday for 6 hours without reduction in wages! This will allow blacks and homosexuals to get decent work, and do not remain on the sidelines as currently.
- Evening courses in all universities, for working class students! Universities under control by the trade unions, feminist, black students, etc.
- Against the pink market! No support for GLS companies, who profit from the discrimination.
- Public Kindergartens! That the State organize the housework (washing, cooking, ironing etc), to end the dual journey of woman!
- That the health and education services are geared to the sexual and racial diversity, and controlled by the workers!
- Labor and Social Security Rights for the maids and housekeepers! Labor and pension rights for homosexual couples!
- Free and public Contraception! That the State guarantees the abortion for poor women!
- Most of these slogans are anti-capitalist. I.e., can be performed only in a socialist society. There-



LUIZA MAHIM

fore, we must be against all Governments of the bourgeoisie or in collaboration with it! The sexism, racism and homophobia can only end up in a society under a direct Government of the workers' assemblies!

### Endnotes

[1] Hurricane Katrina was the costliest natural disaster and one of the five deadliest hurricanes in the history of the United States. At least 1,836 people died in the actual hurricane and in the subsequent floods, making it the deadliest U.S. hurricane since the 1928 Okeechobee hurricane.

[2] February 1988 - 277 people died in flooding and landslides in the Baixada Fluminense region and in the city of Petropolis in the Sierras. In the rest of the month hundreds more died in new landslides and flooding. A hospital collapsed, killing 18 people.

[3] The Malê Revolt (also known as The Great Revolt) is perhaps the most significant slave rebellion in Brazil. On a Sunday during Ramadan in 1835, in the city of Salvador da Bahia, a small group of black slaves and freedmen, inspired by Muslim teachers, rose up against the government.

[4] In order to enter university in Brazil, candidates must undergo a public open examination called "Vestibular", which usually lasts 1-2 days and takes place once a year. Vestibular consists of a long examination on high school subjects, including Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, Literature, Portuguese language, and a foreign language, usually English.

Since public universities are totally free of charge, competition at the Vestibular is usually fierce for a place in a public university. Recently some universities in Brazil started accepting students according to performance during school and a new entrance examination was designed by the Education Ministry and adopted by most public universities, ENEM (which stands for Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio). Both ENEM and "Vestibular" will co-exist in the future.

# CON 17 Won't Fool The Working Class! Revolutionary Marxist Group of South Africa

## Climate change

**T**he annual festival of polluters is was held in the port city of Durban, South Africa, which faces east, towards the Indian Ocean which at its other end washes the shores of India. Beyond that, even further east, lies the global powerhouse of China. For a brief moment Durban represents the battle ground between the oppressed masses of the world and the capitalist rulers. The working class must make its stand here and raise its revolutionary banner.

The United Nations circus, the Conference of the Parties, rolls in for its 17<sup>th</sup> instalment of ineptitude, diplomatic wrangling and tragicomic sideshows. The main event will be preceded by "intense" negotiations, threats, demands for "global leadership", and various calls for the governments of the world to achieve some tangible, if negligible, "agreement" to address the mounting impact of climate change on our planet and its people.

Even piecemeal, half-hearted commitments and undertakings will be welcomed by the middle class activists and lobbyists of the "environmental justice movement". The impasse on climate change – one that has been with us for the last 30 years – reflects the life and death struggle between the imperialist powers of the EU, USA and Japan on the one hand and the emerging "new" imperialist powers of China and to a lesser extent India, Brazil and Russia.

The Earth and all its natural resources are treated as an extension of the capitalist system of exploitation for profit. The polluters, cloaking themselves in the language of carbon emissions, carbon trading and so on, are merely playing out their different profit-seeking interests in the battle to determine who amongst the robbers will emerge as the chief global thug.

South Africa's ruling class, historically servants of Western imperialism, are caught between old masters and new "friends"; its own imperialist ambitions and the juggernauts of decaying capitalism. What can the "host" (the ANC government) hope for at an event which will demonstrate at every turn that it is only the most junior player permitted to sit at the "grown-ups" table...? Nothing of substance!

The working class – the only force capable of saving humanity and the planet – can and must use the event to expose the bankrupt system of global capitalism and take a step towards building anew the international workers movement.

### **Capitalist Anarchy Threatens Humanity & the Earth!**

Socialist long ago recognised that capitalism is a system of economic and social relations based

on wage slavery. Driven solely by the need to realise profit from its earliest days capitalism has set out to conquer the world and subjugate not only territory, nations and people, but the very planet we live on. The natural environment – where it has not facilitated the capitalist quest for profits – has been ruthlessly remade and brought under "control". After 150 years of relentless profiteering, wars, destruction and poisoning, the planet is fast approaching breaking point.

The anarchy of capitalist production – destroyer of human beings – drives the planet headlong towards barbarism. The unquenchable thirst for raw materials ignites the fuse of the extractive industries whose main play thing is the African continent, once more set upon by the capitalist wolves, each laying claim to its mineral wealth.

Rivers are diverted to generate power for the factories, millions of people are displaced, and cultures, languages and life-styles are simply destroyed. The rainforests are plundered. The glaciers melt. The oceans rise. The deserts encroach. The temperature of the planet increases. Entire species are wiped out and whole bio-spheres are threatened.

The victim of capitalism's eco-terrorism is not only the planet. It is humanity itself - systematically driven to extinction by the global capitalist system! Millions die from the most rudimentary needs which cannot be met under the profit system.

Capitalism fails to keep even its wretched wage slaves alive: We have no food; we have no shelter or clothing. Clean and safe water is a dream. Safe and clean energy does not exist for the poor. Our "environment" is a township without roads, street lights or parks; our "environment" is a squatter camp without toilets, electricity, water or sanitation.

### **What Must the Working Class Do?**

The black working class knows that in South Africa energy is supplied abundantly and cheaply by ESKOM to the mines and factories.



Rivers are diverted to generate power for the factories, millions of people are displaced, and cultures, languages and life-styles are simply destroyed. The rainforests are plundered. The glaciers melt. The oceans rise. The deserts encroach. The temperature of the planet increases. Entire species are wiped out and whole bio-spheres are threatened.

The bourgeois ANC government celebrates 100 years by spending R100 million without a second thought. The same ANC which benefits from contracts and tenders related to coal power stations enjoys the benefits of dirty power to get its hands on dirty millions. We are hungry, we are unemployed, we are homeless.

We endure poor, sub-standard education. Our children have no future or prospects for a "better life". We are dying and the capitalist system is killing us!

The working class has no faith in the United Nations, the UNFCCC or the South African government. We must have no illusions in the false promises of "green jobs" or the wage subsidy scheme or any more "accords" and agreements!

The struggle to protect the environment can only be won by the conscious organisation of the working class fighting on a revolutionary programme. The workers need their own organisation to be strong and united not only in South Africa but across the world. We need a united front of trade unions, civics, community, youth and student organisations to defend and advance our interests against the capitalists and their governments.

- **No Faith in the UN! No Support for Capitalist Governments!**
- **Nationalise ESKOM & SASOL Under Worker & Community Control!**
- **Make the Polluters Pay! Tax the Rich & the Multi-Nationals!**

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**



# Must We Adore Vaclav Havel?

From Michael Parenti's *Blackshirts and Reds* (1997) pp. 97-99: available online at <http://www.michaelparenti.org/BlackShirts.html>

## Honest obituary

Some cold reality on another set of bogus "revolutions" like Libya where "freedom" and "democracy" translated into the victory of Finance Capital with the support of so many 'left' groups like the AWL, USFI, WP, SWP etc.

No figure among the capitalist restorationists in the East has won more adulation from U.S. officials, media pundits, and academics than Vaclav Havel, a playwright who became the first president of post-communist Czechoslovakia and later president of the Czech Republic. The many left-leaning people who also admire Havel seem to have overlooked some things about him: his reactionary religious obscurantism, his undemocratic suppression of leftist opponents, and his profound dedication to economic inequality and unrestrained free-market capitalism.

Raised by governesses and chauffeurs in a wealthy and fervently anticommunist family, Havel denounced democracy's "cult of objectivity and statistical average" and the idea that rational, collective social efforts should be applied to solving the environmental crisis. He called for a new breed of political leader who would rely less on "rational, cognitive thinking," show "humility in the face of the mysterious order of the Being," and "trust in his own subjectivity as his principal link with the subjectivity of the world." Apparently, this new breed of leader would be a superior elitist cogitator, not unlike Plato's philosopher, endowed with a "sense of transcendental responsibility" and "archetypal wisdom." Havel never explained how this transcendent archetypal wisdom would translate into actual policy decisions, and for whose benefit at whose expense.

Havel called for efforts to preserve the Christian family in the Christian nation. Presenting himself as a man of peace and stating that he would never sell arms to oppressive regimes, he sold weapons to the Philippines and the fascist regime in Thailand. In June 1994, General Pinochet, the man who butchered Chilean democracy, was reported to be arms shopping in Czechoslovakia - with no audible objections from Havel.

Havel joined wholeheartedly in George Bush's Gulf War, an enterprise that killed over 100,000 Iraqi civilians. In 1991, along with other [e]astern European pro-capitalist leaders, Havel voted with the United States to condemn human rights violations in Cuba. But he has never uttered a word of condemnation of rights violations in El Salvador, Columbia, Indonesia, or any other U.S. client state.

In 1992, while president of Czechoslovakia, Havel, the great democrat, demanded that par-

liament be suspended and he be allowed to rule by edict, the better to ram through free-market "reforms." That same year, he signed a law that made the advocacy of communism a felony with a penalty of up to eight years imprisonment. He claimed the Czech constitution required him to sign it. In fact, as he knew, the law violated the Charter of Human Rights which is incorporated into the Czech constitution. In any case, it did not require his signature to become law. In 1995, he supported and signed another undemocratic law barring communists and former communists from employment in public agencies.

The propagation of anticommunism has remained a top priority for Havel. He led "a frantic international campaign" to keep in operation two U.S.-financed, cold war radio stations, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, so they could continue saturating Eastern Europe with their anticommunist propaganda.

Under Havel's government, a law was passed making it a crime to propagate national, religious, and CLASS hatred. In effect, criticisms of big moneyed interests were now illegal, being unjustifiably lumped with ethnic and religious bigotry. Havel's government warned labor unions not to involve themselves in politics. Some militant unions had their property taken from them and handed over to compliant company unions.

In 1995, Havel announced that the 'revolution' against communism would not be complete until everything was privatized. Havel's government liquidated the properties of the Socialist Union of Youth - which included camp sites, recreation halls, and cultural and scientific facilities for children - putting the properties under the management of five joint stock companies, at the expense of the youth who were left to roam the streets.

Under Czech privatization and "restitution" programs, factories, shops, estates, homes, and much of the public land was sold at bargain prices to foreign and domestic capitalists. In the Czech and Slovak republics, former aristocrats or their heirs were being given back all lands their families had held before 1918 under the Austro-Hungarian empire, dispossessing the previous occupants and sending many of them into destitution. Havel himself took personal ownership of public



United in reaction and CIA funding: Vaclav Havel with the Tibetan Dalai Lama (centre) and Rabiya Kadeer, head of the World Uyghur Congress, at a human rights conference in Prague in 2009.

properties that had belonged to his family forty years before.

While presenting himself as a man dedicated to doing good for others, he did well for himself. For all these reasons some of us do not have warm fuzzy feelings toward Vaclav Havel.

-- Michael Parenti

## Who funds the Dalai Lama and the WUC?

The Dalai Lama's government in exile in India was granted \$US 1.7 million a year from the CIA until the mid 70s. It is now funded by The Tibet Fund, a US-based charity which garners the donations of wealthy right wing US businessmen with Tibetan connections to ease the financial burden on the CIA.

The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) is an international organisation of exiled Uyghur groups said to "represent the collective interest of the Uyghur people" both inside and outside of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of China. The World Uyghur Congress says it is a nonviolent and peaceful opposition movement against Chinese occupation of East Turkestan and an unconditional rejection of totalitarianism, religious intolerance and terrorism as an instrument of policy.

The organisation is funded in part by the National Endowment for Democracy or NED, which gives the WUC \$215,000 annually for "human rights research and advocacy projects". The National Endowment for Democracy, or NED, is a U.S. non-profit organization that was founded in 1983 to promote democracy. It is funded primarily through an annual allocation from the U.S. Congress.

The Chinese government has accused it of fomenting unrest in Xinjiang, and added the WUC to its list of terrorist organisations in December 2003. It has labelled the Congress president as a "terrorist" who "conspired with separatists and religious extremists to plan terror attacks." Kadeer rejected the accusations, saying that "anyone who is unhappy with China's harsh rule is a 'separatist'"

During the July 2009 Ürümqi riots, the Chinese government said it had intercepted phone calls of overseas Turkestan groups and groups inside the country. The government has also alleged that Kadeer has close ties with the Dalai Lama, accused of inciting unrest in Tibet in 2008, and claimed that WUC president Kadeer said that "something similar should happen in Xinjiang." The People's Daily, attacked the WUC, saying that it was funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, whose main sponsor was the US Congress. (Wiki).

The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is geopolitically crucial for China as the base for all their projected oil pipelines to Central Asia lest the Straits of Malacca are blockaded by the US.



# On the Continuity of Trotskyism

Programme vs. Struggle? No, Programme via Struggle! By Gerry Downing 29 November

## Marxist theory

### Introduction

The following quote could have been written at anytime in the post war history of Trotskyism. It neither guarantees the orthodoxy of the authors nor the success of their endeavours. It could describe either an unprincipled lash-up or a principled fight for revolutionary Trotskyism. But it does speak of struggle on a programmatic basis similar to the one we are engaged upon now.

*"The process of winning political hegemony for revolutionary Marxism in the upsurge will involve a range of tactics and organisational forms. But we must be clear on our goal: to build revolutionary Marxist, that is, mass Trotskyist parties in every country as sections of the Fourth International. One important aspect of the struggle to build the Fourth International is attempting to unify the world Trotskyist movement -- the political forces that affirm the Transitional Program and identify with the Trotskyist tradition. If we achieved this, we could qualitatively increase our impact in the workers' movement and clarify and resolve our differences in the framework of international democratic centralism. Our International needs to promote a process of political clarification and organisational reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. To build the Fourth International as a real World Party of Socialist Revolution -- this is the core of the problem we face. To take advantage of the contradictions in the present, undeniably difficult situation to advance the struggle to build the Fourth International -- this is the decision we must make."*<sup>[1]</sup>

We might mention this Wiki article on the life of Jock Haston which shows the struggle for Trotskyism was waged by many:

*With the turn of the war against the Nazis the RCP was at pains to look for any signs of the coming revolutionary upheavals that were expected in line with the perspectives of the Fourth International as outlined in the famous Transitional programme. The leading theoretician of the RCP, Ted Grant, was therefore far seeing when he sought to tailor the political demands of the movement to the actual movement rather than succumbing to a rosy view of events. This realistic view of events was also prompted by the agreement of the RCP leadership with the documents of the Goldman-Morrow-Heijenoort minority in the American Socialist Workers Party.*

*Therefore when in 1946 Haston led a delegation of the RCP to a conference of some of the sections of the Fourth International in Paris it is surprising that he moved that the conference be*

*considered as a Congress of the movement. This was in part motivated by the opposition of the RCP to the demoralisation of the German comrades of the International Communists of Germany (IKD).*

*More important, politically, were the amendments that Haston wrote, along with Bill Hunter, to the resolutions of the FI leadership put forward at the meeting. In contrast to the FI leadership the RCP amendments recognise that Stalinism had emerged from the war strengthened and that an economic crisis was unlikely in the near future. Therefore it was argued political demands and expectations had to recognise these changes and not pose revolutionary tasks in the absence of a revolutionary situation. The FI majority around Ernest Mandel and Michel Pablo, backed by the SWP in the United States, prevailed however.*

*The dispute with the leadership of the FI deepened with time and became centred on three interlinked questions. Firstly there was the role of Stalinism in Eastern Europe where the RCP took a different position to the FI in particular when the latter began to support the split of Josip Broz Tito in Yugoslavia from the USSR the RCP became very critical. This criticism being expressed in documents written by Haston. Secondly there was the question of economic perspectives and the growing tendency of the Labour party government of Clement Attlee to take various industries into state ownership as was also happening in Eastern Europe. Again it was Haston who opposed the idea that state ownership could be equated with any form of socialism in the pages of Socialist Appeal.*<sup>[2]</sup>

### Did the Fourth International die in 1943?

The Fourth International degenerated and died as a revolutionary organisation, we are told by Comrade Jim, in the period 1943 to 1951. This is the conclusion drawn by James Robertson at the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in 1966 in London (he was bureaucratically expelled from the conference essentially for this speech on the initiative of Gerry Healy and Mike Banda),

*"The pressure which produced Pabloism began in 1943, following the failure of Leon Trotsky's perspective of the break-up of the Soviet bureaucracy and of new October revolutions in the aftermath of the war: this failure resulted from the inability to forge revolutionary parties. After 1950, Pabloism dominated the F.I.; only when the fruits of Pabloism were clear did a section of the F.I. pull back. In our opinion, the "orthodox" movement has still to face up to the new theo-*



*Cannon's failure to defend revolutionary defeatism in that trial was a crucial victory for the state. Grandizo Munis (above) was correct on this, even if he clearly attacked from an ultra-left perspective.*

*retical problems which rendered it susceptible to Pabloism in 1943-50 and gave rise to a ragged, partial split in 1952-54."*<sup>[3]</sup>

On one level there is a great deal of truth in this assertion, serious problems beset the Fourth International during the war, the US SWP was clearly falling victim to national isolation, but is very wrong to speak of "the failure of Leon Trotsky's perspective of the break-up of the Soviet bureaucracy and of new October revolutions in the aftermath of the war". Trotsky's perspectives were those of revolutionary struggle. The Trotskyist fought those struggles heroically as outlined below. We cannot speak of the "failure of perspectives" in this manner as if was wrong to have these perspectives in the first place and what happened was inevitable. It was not. But problems there were as IDOT No. 1 points out:

*"In WWII a very powerful wave of national chauvinism swept the US including the working class. This assisted in the Trial and jailing of the 18 Trotskyist leaders, including Cannon. Cannon's failure to defend revolutionary defeatism in that trial was a crucial victory for the state. Grandizo Munis was correct on this, even if he clearly attacked from an ultra-left perspective. This national isolationism grew until it produced the 1946 American Theses<sup>[4]</sup> and Cannon's The Coming American Revolution<sup>[5]</sup> -- which was both objectivist and chauvinist at the same time."*<sup>[6]</sup>

We now know that the SWP was heavily infiltrated by state agents at that time, whilst repudiating the Healyite Security and the Fourth International slander campaign against Joe Hansen and George Novak, nevertheless as IDOT No. 1 points out,

*"Sylvia Callen Franklin was a GPU spy in the SWP*

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**

and passed on internal documents. Floyd Cleveland Miller organised the assassination of Trotskyist seamen on the WWII convoys, having infiltrated the movement and there were others, like the Dallins and Robert Sheldon Hart who had a case to answer.”[7]

## More to the Fourth International than the US SWP

But there was more to the Fourth International than the US SWP. There was the political and ideological disruption caused by lack of an International during WWII but we maintain that the proceedings of the Second World Congress in 1948 went a long way to overcoming that disruption and its resolutions and proceedings are still within the norms of revolutionary Trotskyism. This is shown particularly in the clear manner in which it tackled and fought out internal problems in constituent national parties, like any real functioning International must. But as it points out,

“Comrade Trotsky, the founder, leader and inspirer of the International, was among the first to be murdered by Stalin after the outbreak of the war. Later the Stalinist gangsters claimed other victims. In Greece they killed over one hundred Trotskyist, included among them the most qualified leaders of the movement. In Indochina they disposed of Tha-Tu-Thau and numerous others. They killed Blasco, the Italian Trotskyist leader who could have rendered inestimable service in the construction of the Italian party.

The Gestapo, wherever it had control, hounded the Trotskyist militants and submitted them to fierce torture and annihilation. Only a handful of the German Trotskyist survived the concentration camps. The Austrian Trotskyist lost some of their major cadres after they were placed on trial by the Nazis and condemned to death. The Czechoslovak Trotskyist lost about a dozen of their cadre elements. The Polish section was wiped out almost in its entirety. The French, Belgian, the Dutch organizations lost the most experienced leaders and many militants.

The Anglo-American imperialists who fought the war ostensibly in the name of democracy and against fascism did not feel in the least restrained in persecuting the Trotskyist. The leaders of the American Trotskyist were thrown into prison for over a year. The British Trotskyist suffered a similar fate. But they were especially ruthless in the colonial countries. The leaders and many members of the Indian party spent the war years in jail without indictment, trial or any definite term. The Chinese Trotskyist were submitted to the triple brutalities of the Japanese imperialists, Chiang Kai-shek’s hangmen and the Stalinists. Even Switzerland, the ideal country of bourgeois democracy, which remained neutral in the war, would not allow the Trotskyist to function freely and jailed its leading spokesmen.” [8]

The details were not known to the 1948 Congress but here is what happened to the French

Trotskyists in 1944 (one year after Trotskyism had supposedly ‘collapsed’),

“The Paris region was organised as two branches. But the heart of the organisation was in Brittany, both around Nantes and in particular around Brest where the soldiers provided the party with Ausweis [identity cards] and weapons. In Brest the organisation had about fifty soldiers on average despite some people being posted elsewhere. Contacts were established in Toulon, Valence, La Rochelle and at Conches aerodrome. Links were established with the German Trotskyist organisation, most importantly in the port of Hamburg, in Lübeck and in Rostock. Victor [a German Trotskyist, whose real name was Wide-lin] was responsible for these contacts. Arbeiter und Soldat was also distributed in garrisons in Italy. On 7 October 18 Fourth International Committees activists in Brittany were arrested, along with much of the Paris organisation. In total around fifty French activists were rounded up, and many of them were tortured, executed or sent to concentration camps. Similarly, as many as fifty Der Arbeiter soldier comrades were put to death, and their paper never reappeared.”

The full contents of their press are available here thanks to David Broader, an AWL member at the time. We maintain those journals constitute an heroic struggle for Trotskyism; [9]

## How the 1948 Second Congress fought

Here is how the 1948 Second Congress fought out the question of opportunism and sectarianism,

“In summarizing the long intensive discussion, we see despite the various divergent tendencies, two main currents:

(a) The traditional Trotskyist current which forms the overwhelming majority of the functioning sections. This current retains its analysis of the fundamental crisis of capitalism in our epoch. This crisis has only been aggravated by the consequences of the war. It retains its perspectives of the socialist revolution, having confidence in the revolutionary capacities of the proletariat, in its ability to liberate itself from the grip of Stalinism. It places the main emphasis on the transformation of our organizations from propaganda groups into genuine mass parties, a transformation which is not only necessary, but for the first time also feasible.

(b) Opposed to this is the current which lays stress on the retreat of the socialist revolution, on the forces of historic retrogression, the sinking into barbarism, the incapacity of the proletariat, its degeneration, its profound contamination with Stalinism. They are impressed, on the contrary, by every “success” of capitalism, by its “stabilization.” They look with scepticism on the future of the International and they denigrate its work and achievements. This revisionist current is profoundly defeatist in relation to the perspectives of the proletarian revolution. This current



Ta Thu Thau, Vietnamese Trotskyist leader murdered together with his comrades by Ho Chi Minh to appease French Imperialism.

embraces principally the KDI and the Workers Party.

The line of this tendency would sterilize and paralyze the struggle of the International to sink roots into the mass movement.” [10]

Robertson’s speech at the 1966 conference was, as the citation above shows, far closer to the truth than Healy and Lambert. They simply wanted to establish a bogus line of continuity running through the International Committee 1953 split to avoid the questions of their own past errors and opportunism. Here is some more of Robertson’s 1966 speech,

“We take issue with the notion that the present crisis of capitalism is so sharp and deep that Trotskyist revisionism is needed to tame the workers, in a way comparable to the degeneration of the Second and Third Internationals. Such an erroneous estimation would have as its point of departure an enormous overestimation of our present significance, and would accordingly be disorienting.

We had better concentrate upon what Lenin said concerning the various, ubiquitous crises which beset imperialism (a system essentially in crisis since before 1914); Lenin pointed out that there is no impossible situation for the bourgeoisie, it is necessary to throw them out. Otherwise, “crises” are all in a day’s work for the mechanisms and agencies of imperialism in muddling through from one year to the next. Just now, in fact, their task is easier, after the terrible shattering of the Indonesian workers’ movement; add to this the other reversals which expose the revisionists’ dependence on petty-bourgeois and bureaucratic strata, like the softening of the USSR, the isolation of China, India brought to heel, Africa neatly stabilized, and Castro a captive of Russia and the U.S...

Many statements and positions of the I.C. show theoretical weakness or confusion on this question. Thus, the I.C. Statement on the fall of Ben

Bella declared: "Where the state takes a bonapartist form on behalf of a weak bourgeoisie, as in Algeria or Cuba, then the type of 'revolt' occurring on June 19-20 in Algiers is on the agenda." -- Newsletter, 26 June 1965.

While the nationalization in Algeria now amounts to some 15 per cent of the economy, the Cuban economy is, in essence, entirely nationalized; China probably has more vestiges of its bourgeoisie. If the Cuban bourgeoisie is indeed "weak," as the I.C. affirms, one can only observe that it must be tired from its long swim to Miami, Florida." [11]

However there was substance also in the charges laid against Robertson in that 1966 Congress by Healy and Banda. They charged Robertson with a US national orientation, and subsequent history has shown the truth of that assertion, and they charged him with a propagandist orientation because of his assertion of the need for a Fighting Propaganda Group,

"The Spartacist draft theses state: "The tactical aim of the SL in the next period is to build a sufficiently large propaganda group capable of agitational intervention in every social struggle in the U.S. as a necessary step in the building of the revolutionary party. For this intervention we seek an increase in our forces to at least tenfold. From our small force of around 100 we move toward our goal in three parallel lines of activity: splits and fusions with other groups, direct involvement in mass struggle, and the strengthening and education of our organization." [12]

This, Healy claimed represented not an orientation to the working class in struggle but a deep scepticism of the working class and its potential to make revolution and a petty bourgeois orientation to other self-proclaimed Trotskyist groups which became a substitute for the class struggle in later years. They have now become parasites on all the other claimants to Trotskyism. This criticism was basically correct, leaving aside the constant 'impeding catastrophe' method of mobilising members Healy had which we will come to later. As the IDOT No 1 observed of the IBT and the Spart family in general,

"You have "disappeared" the rest of the subjectively revolutionary Trotskyists internationally, the rest of the subjectively revolutionists of any colour outside the "Family" and with them the entire historical experience of the fight by other forces for Trotskyism internationally, however inadequate that might have been and with them has gone the working class and its revolutionary potential. The healthy revolutionary elements outside of your own ranks must now be reduced to a few dozen at most, in the eyes of the three opposing sectarian "Family" groups." [13]

Now we will look at the history of the British Trotskyist movement and the IC tradition in Britain as set out in 1989 by Tony Gard, a former member who went on to join Thornett's WSL and later founded the Revolutionary Internationalist League, British section of the International Trotskyist Committee (ITC), the international remnants after the 1982 split with the WSL).[14]

## The origins and Development of the International Committee Section in Britain

The Workers Socialist League was formed in 1974 as a result of the expulsion by the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of the Oxford based opposition led by Alan T., Tony R., and John L.. While there has been considerable discussion in TILC (The Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, the International formed by the WSL) and in the ITC and elsewhere on the history of the Socialist Labour League/ Workers Revolutionary Party in the context of the crisis of the Fourth International, a summary of the main points pertinent to the development of the Workers Socialist League is necessary.

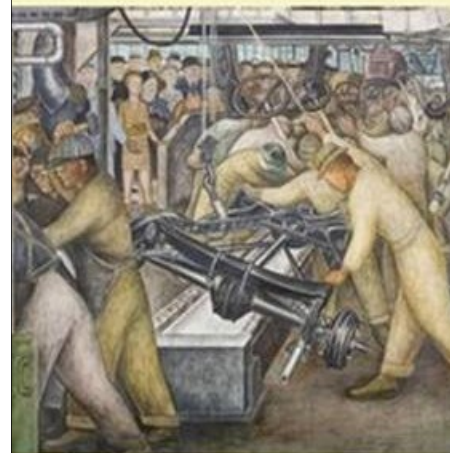
(a.) The formation of the Revolutionary Communist Party in 1944 reflected (to a certain extent) a sectarian response to the Labour Party class collaboration (the coalition government, etc.) and to the lack of any real Labour Party activity during the war. The problems this created became marked with the end of the war and the revival of Labour Party political life in 1945 and thereafter. Subsequently, Healy led an opposition calling for entry into the Labour Party, but it was essentially an opportunist response to the strength of social democracy and the weakness of Trotskyist forces. These developments took place in a very difficult period for the Fourth International. The Stalinist purges, the assassination of Trotsky, the war, and the Nazi occupation of much of Europe had severely depleted its forces and disrupted its functioning internationally.

It had, nevertheless, come through the war and into the postwar world as a revolutionary international. However, the strength, politically, of Stalinism and the expansion of the Stalinist bureaucracy's area of control, the beginnings of the restabilisation of capitalism under US hegemony, and the Cold War posed enormous problems for Trotskyists, led in some cases to physical liquidation and generally to their isolation from the masses. Healy's split from the RCP on the basis of Labour Party entry and the consequent collapse of the RCP was the application in British conditions of the liquidationist course taken by the Fourth International under its International Secretary, Michel Pablo, as it sought short cuts out of its isolation and looked to larger forces that could in some way be substituted for building Trotskyist parties.

(b.) Healy's group, The Club, practised a liquidationist form of entrism in the period 1948 to 1956 and to some extent down to 1958. It was an early example of Trotskyists' attempting to create themselves as a centrist current in the Labour Party when one does not exist and adapting to the bureaucratic leaders of left reformist currents when these emerge. The principal vehicle for The Club's politics was the journal *Socialist Outlook*. When this was banned, the arguments of Labour Party legality were accepted

## Militant years

ALAN THORNETT



### Car workers' struggles in Britain in the 60s and 70s

Militant Years by Alan Thornett, WSL leader, expelled bureaucratically by Gerry Healy in 1974.

without a struggle, and The Club became part of the Tribune tendency.

(c.) In the late 1940s and early 1950s, The Club completely supported the policies of Pablo's International Secretariat. It endorsed the increasingly confused and ultimately revisionist response to developments in postwar Stalinism including the view that Tito's nationalist Stalinism in Yugoslavia was a form of centrism. Subsequently there was no attempt to re-examine the lessons of this episode.

(d.) The 1953 split was a response to the effects on national sections of Pablo's generalisation of his liquidationist orientation to Stalinism. For The Club this meant a clash of liquidationisms Pablo's liquidation into Stalinism vs. Healy's liquidation into social democracy. Both sides of the split (Pablo's International Secretariat and the International Committee of Cannon, Healy, and Lambert) were part of the Fourth International's centrist degeneration. There were positive aspects to the International Committee's stand for the political independence of Trotskyists from Stalinism. Nevertheless, the International Committee remained trapped within national Trotskyist responses and thus never conducted an examination of the postwar Fourth International and carried over from Pabloism the objectivist method which, for instance, The Club applied in its Labour Party work.

(e.) The contradictory character of Trotskyist-centrism, and specifically of the International Committee split, was illustrated by The Club's generally principled and quite successful intervention into the Communist Party's crisis in 1956. This did not, however, mean a break with Labour Party liquidationist politics, as the politics of the 1958 Rank-and-file Conference indicated. However, it did provide a basis for the "left turn" with

the formation of the Socialist Labour League as a public Trotskyist organisation (while continuing to work in the Labour Party) in 1959.

(f.) This “left turn” is particularly important for us, since from its contradictions developed the political tendency identified with Alan T. This turn did not represent a break with past methods or any political reassessment. The conjunctural basis of the turn consisted of the following elements:

1) the enlargement of the group as a result of its intervention in the Communist Party in 1956/1957;

2) the overall decline of the Labour left and the difficulties in Labour Party work created by the witch-hunt;

3) the growth of shop-floor militancy on the wages front, as shop stewards committees led largely unofficial strikes to improve living standards independently of the bureaucrats under conditions of full employment and to a much lesser extent, the rapid growth of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament as a mass movement outside the Labour Party but having close connections with the Labour and trade union left. Subsequently these developments were extended by the turn to youth in the early 1960s, as the Labour Party set up a national youth movement, the Young Socialists, in the wake of its third successive general election defeat, at a time of growing militancy among working-class youth. As a result, the Socialist Labour League (SLL) drew to itself (and to Trotskyism, despite its distortions), an important layer of student and working-class youth and a smaller but significant layer of industrial militants.

(g.) However, the general objectivist method was retained and applied to the process of economic crisis and class struggle. From liquidationism Healy's forces lurched increasingly to sectarianism, especially after the break/ expulsion of the Young Socialists from the Labour Party around the time of the 1964 general election. Objectivism and sectarianism were combined in an increasingly prominent catastrophism; the theory of an impending capitalist economic collapse which sees the working class break from reformism. At the same time, the elements of confusion on Stalinism continued and were reinforced by the way the Socialist Labour League reacted to the Castroism of the US Socialist Workers Party (which was the basis for the International Secretariat-SWP reunification that formed the United Secretariat of the Fourth International [USFI] in 1963) by asserting that Cuba remained capitalist. On the other hand, the Healyites were to show their own sort of accommodation to the Maoist Red Guards in China and to the successes of the Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy against US imperialism. They also retained their basic confusion on social democracy, a confusion embodied in the call for a Labour government on socialist policies.

(h.) The other side of the SLL's objectivism was its failure to fight for the Transitional Programme. At best its use of transitional demands

and the education of its cadres in the significance and method of the Transitional Programme were erratic. Increasingly the Transitional Programme simply disappeared from the League's practice. To some extent, this point is made by John L. in an article, “Lessons of Our History”, published in the WSL's newspaper Socialist Press in 1975 (see issue no. 18, 1 October 1975). In this article which compares most favourably as a serious piece of political argument with the superficial journalistic hack work John L. is currently churning out the abstract sectarianism of the 1974 WRP election manifesto with its ‘maximum demand’ calls for nationalisation, socialist policies, etc., is contrasted with the use of transitional demands in the 1965 SLL election manifesto.

The contrast is correctly drawn, and John L.'s arguments on transitional demands and against Healy's 1970s sectarianism are well made, but this article illustrates some of the confusions the WSL inherit. In general, it gives uncritical support to the Socialist Labour League of the mid-1960s and traces its abandonment of the Transitional Programme from 1967 to 1974. It does not look at the strengths and weaknesses of the SLL in the early 1960s to mid-1960s in the context of its history as a whole, its previous as well as its subsequent development. Thus, though a rather routine reference to objectivism affecting both sides of the 1953 split is made at the end of the article, John L.'s general view is the same as Alan T.'s in *The Battle for Trotskyism*: the sectarian turn of the late 1960s and 1970s resulted from the impatience of previously isolated revolutionaries faced by a massive upsurge in the level of struggle worldwide.

(i.) Even during this supposedly best period, the SLL remained trapped by national Trotskyism, as did the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI); the only other section of any size in the International Committee after 1963). Indeed, federalism and national Trotskyism were confirmed by the International Committee's 1966 World Congress. This prevented the development of international democratic centralism and thus prevented also any international struggle against the weaknesses of the national sections. The International Committee continued as a mere bloc of the SLL and the OCI: the mutual nonaggression pact between them was the basis for their split in 1971, after which the International Committee was merely the SLL/ WRP and its satellite clones.

(j.) Thus, by the late 1960s and early 1970s sectarianism and catastrophism were rampant and increasingly bizarre. These features facilitated the growth of other centrist such as International Socialists/Socialist Workers Party (IS/ SWP) and the Trotskyist-centrist International Marxist Group (IMG) British section of the USFI. Neither of these could offer any political alternative to the SLL/WRP. On a number of points (the class nature of the Soviet Union, the leading role of the working class in the revolution) the SLL/ WRP was correct over against the IS/SWP and



Gerry Healy, Speakers' Corner, 1942. The turn to philosophy (that is, Healy's idiosyncratic idealism) in the early 1970s served to create a wall between the SLL membership and the real world, with the former dominated by an increasingly brutal internal regime.

IMG. However, they were able to expand because of the sectarianism of the SLL/WRP, for instance towards the student based movement against the Vietnam War. (Incidentally, the growth of Militant, though less spectacular in this period, was facilitated by the sectarianism of the SLL/WRP, IMG, and IS/SWP on the Labour Party.)

The turn to philosophy (that is, Healy's idiosyncratic idealism) in the early 1970s served to create a wall between the SLL membership and the real world, with the former dominated by an increasingly brutal internal regime. The transformation of the SLL into a cult was complete. These features help to explain the failure to develop any internal oppositional struggle. Alan T.'s opposition was in reality a belated resistance emerging in conditions where internal discussion, clarification, and struggle were completely impossible.

(k.) Finally, it is necessary to make a general point on the particular characteristics of the objectivism of the International Committee tradition, represented by the SLL/ WRP, since it has an important bearing on the subsequent development of the WSL. This has, in fact, been touched on, in points g and j above. All objectivism represents a denial of the role of revolutionary consciousness, thus of the struggle to build Trotskyist parties as the conscious revolutionary leadership of the working class, through a fight for Trotskyist politics and intervention in the class struggle based on the Transitional Programme. Objectivism substitutes a notion of revolutionary consciousness in some sense or other evolving as part of the objective process. This always involves a rejection of the political independence of the working class from bourgeois ideology and petty-bourgeois ideology (the latter, of course, representing no political independence from the bourgeoisie). This understanding of objectivism was established long ago in the communist movement. It is in fact the core of Lenin's argument in “What Is To Be Done?”

## Objectivism

Nevertheless, objectivism has been the theoretical basis of the centrist degeneration and consequent crisis of the Fourth International. It has led to the tail-ending of one movement or process after another (the attitude to Titoism in Yugosla-



of the International Secretariat following the 1953 split and those which were part of the International Committee. The former have tended to adapt to petty-bourgeois forces and tendencies of nationalist or Stalinist origin: the FLN in the Algerian War of the 1950s, Castroism in Cuba, the student movement in Europe and North America in the 1960s and early 1970s, guerrillism in Latin America during the same period, Sandinism in Nicaragua.

*While much of that criticism was correct, the orthodoxy itself was poisoned. Fundamentally, it represented a legitimization of the equally revisionist workerism of the International Committee tradition. One particularly important aspect of this form of objectivism has been the attitude of the International Committee currents to the movements of the specially oppressed. At best this has been a nod in the direction of democratic rights for example, on abortion at worst outright hostility for example, to lesbians and gay men.*

Movements of the specially oppressed were universally attacked as petty-bourgeois, single issue politics, and a diversion from the class struggle. None of this represented in reality any more of a struggle for the political independence of the working class than the International Secretariat/USFI's forms of objectivism. As the attitude to the specially oppressed shows, it has left workers open to and even reinforced reactionary bourgeois ideology. It has reflected an accommodation to the prejudices of the more

and early 1950s being the first clear example of this method). However, there have tended to be some differences between the objectivism followed by those forces which

In the SLL/WRP these tendencies were reflected in adaptation to the rank-and-file militancy of the shop stewards movements in the 1960s and early 1970s and were reinforced hand-in-hand with its increasingly sectarian, catastrophist turn. Indeed, there was a direct link between the objective process of workers' struggles as conceived by the SLL/WRP and catastrophism - the crisis and collapse of the capitalist economy pushing the working class further to the left and forcing it to break with reformism. However, this did not immunise the SLL/WRP or any other International Committee currents, from the very same accommodation to bourgeois or petty-bourgeois forces that they attacked in the International Secretariat/USFI, so that the WRP was to display an uncritical worship of Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein, and Yasser Arafat unsurpassed by anything in the history of Pabloism." [15]

Part of that struggle also was the 1985 split in the Workers Revolutionary party and also the current regroupment process. It is correct to assert that there was a programmatic break with Trotskyism in this period. As Tony Gard outlines above this was based on fatalism and objectivism by the small forces that emerged from WWII. We may disagree on whether this happened in 1943 or in 1951-3. I favour the latter because of the political strength of the 1958 Second World Congress but agreement on that is not necessary in my view. However like Tony Gard I believe it is wrong to place an equals sign between the IS and IC in 1953. Despite all the problems of those years a fight against Pablo and what he represented, inadequate, one sided and without any real reassessment of what led to the liquidationist tendency though it was, had many positive aspects to it and must be retrospectively critically supported today. We should not just designate them as two equally degenerate centrist groups because this ignores a real struggle which did produce real gains for Trotskyism in Britain and internationally after Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956. This does not deny real contributions to Trotskyism in the IS/USFI tradition, we speak here of tendencies, not iron laws of history.

[1] Building the Fourth International and mass Trotskyist parties in every country, Submitted by Chris Edwards and Alex Acheson (Britain), Jette Kromann and Inge Sorensen (Denmark) To the Discussion for the XIV World Congress 14 February 1995.

- [2] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jock\\_Haston](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jock_Haston)
- [3] Spartacist Statement to International Conference, <http://www.bolshevik.org/history/ICL/Tr2-icco.htm>
- [4] Theses on the American Revolution, James P. Cannon <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cannon/works/1946/thesis.htm>
- [5] James P. Cannon, The Coming American Revolution, Nov 1946, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cannon/works/1946/comamrev.htm>
- [6] IDOT No 1, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/24552193/In-Defenceof-Trotskyism-No-1>
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] Report on the Fourth International since the Outbreak of War, 1939-48, Written: December 1948 and January 1949, <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/fi/1938-1949/fi-2ndcongress/1948-congress01.htm>
- [9] Arbeiter Und Soldat, Worker and Soldier, The entire contents of Arbeiter Und Soldat here on the ETOL are the result of the efforts of David Broder, who put them up on the Alliance for Workers Liberty website. Broder translated the entire surviving contents of Arbeiter Und Soldat from the German. <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/soldat/index.htm>
- [9] IDOT No 1.
- [10] Report on the Fourth International.
- [11] Spartacist 1966 Statement.
- [12] Ibid.
- [13] IDOT No 1.
- [14] The WSL was founded in 1975 with a leadership grouped around Alan Thornett, Tony Richardson and John Lister, expelled from the WRP in 1974. Terry Eagleton was a well-known member. It inherited much of its politics from the WRP but fought successfully to break from this on Ireland, the woman question and gay and lesbian liberation. The group also concluded that Cuba had been a deformed workers state since the revolution of 1959. It published the weekly paper Socialist Press and a number of issues of the theoretical journal Trotskyism Today.
- [15] Trotskyist History No 1 September 1993, What Happened to the Workers' Socialist League? <http://www.scribd.com/doc/19117508/Trotskyist-History-No-1>

**A Charlatan is Exposed: A reply to Gerry Healy's 'Studies in Dialectical Materialism' By Dave Bruce August 1985**

US Permanent Revolution Preface April 16, 2011:

We are publishing for the first time the full text of David Bruce's critique of the bastardization of dialectics that Gerry Healy foisted on the International Committee in the 1970s and 1980s.

David Bruce joined what was then the Socialist Labour League in the late 1960s and soon afterwards the staff of its print shop. He worked there continuously until the WRP broke up in 1985.

He was, however, one of a soon-to-be-notorious group that worked covertly to expose what its members saw as Healy's personal and the wider movement's political corruption. His essay was at the time and remains to this day the most comprehensive and insightful analysis of the philosophical outlook that Healy called 'the practice of cognition'.

Yet Bruce's contribution to the attempts to overcome the disorientation within the International Committee in those years has been unjustly forgotten.

**[http://forum.permanent-revolution.org/2011/04/  
charlatan-exposed-reply-to-gerry-healys.html](http://forum.permanent-revolution.org/2011/04/charlatan-exposed-reply-to-gerry-healys.html)**

# The AIUF is the tactic, Permanent Revolution is the strategy for today's Imperialist wars on the semi-colonial world By Ret Marut

## Introduction

**T**his piece seeks to defend, clarify and develop the theory of the Anti-Imperialist United Front (AIUF) and is in solidarity with those who have theoretically fought to do so in the past. Unfortunately many who have done so have failed to apply that theory in practice to actual wars by their own bourgeoisie.

In fact that contradiction between theory and practice has now become so acute over the question of support for the Nato-rebels in Libya that one of the foremost contributors to that communist task of theoretical clarification, Stuart King, former leader of Workers Power and now of Permanent Revolution, has been forced to admit to this author that he now repudiated his own vital contribution. The anti-imperialist united front: a debate with the GOR, 30/03/1986 [1] *"I think I was wrong and the GOR were right then"* he now says.

Workers Power/the League for the Fifth International may be forced to ditch their identical King-inspired if not written programme on this vital question. Other groups like the RSO who maintain an anti imperialist line on Libya, and whose document on the AIUF was also clearly inspired by King will have to clarify why that correct if somewhat vacillating position on the AIUF was apparently inapplicable to Libya today. [2]

We will also polemicise against the positions of both the Permanent Revolution Collective (CoReP), to which Socialist Fight was linked for a period, and against the League for the Revolutionary party (LRP) and its international tendency The Communist Organization for the Fourth International (COFI) because the latter use the document of the former in their internal educationals, one of their leaders informed this author. [3]

Therefore all criticisms of the CoReP apply equally to the COFI. The COFI are themselves specifically opposed to the AIUF, rigidly counterposing it to the Trotskyist theory of Permanent Revolution as the following extract shows,

*"We reject popular fronts between the working class and bourgeois parties. The working class cannot share political power with even the shadow of the bourgeoisie; governmental alliances with such elements mean subordination to bourgeois politics. Party members may not occupy positions in bourgeois governments -- including those of "third world," Stalinist and post-Stalinist countries as well as in the imperialist powers. We reject so-called anti-imperialist united fronts as a version of the popular front; they stand in absolute contradiction to the permanent revolution."*[4]

## History of the AIUF

This goes back to the Comintern as first formulated by V. I. Lenin, in the Terms of Admission into Communist International, July, 1920.[5]

*"8. Parties in countries whose bourgeoisie possess colonies and oppress other nations must pursue a most well-defined and clear-cut policy in respect of colonies and oppressed nations. Any party wishing to join the Third International must ruthlessly expose the colonial machinations of the imperialists of its "own" country, must support—in deed, not merely in word—every colonial liberation movement, demand the expulsion of its compatriot imperialists from the colonies, inculcate in the hearts of the workers of its own country an attitude of true brotherhood with the working population of the colonies and the oppressed nations, and conduct systematic agitation among the armed forces against all oppression of the colonial peoples."*

It was further clarified in the Theses on the national and colonial question, Minutes of the Second Congress of the Communist International, Fifth Session July 28, 1920.

*11. In relation to those states that have a more backward, predominantly feudal, patriarchal or peasant patriarchal character, special attention must be paid to the following points:*

*a) All Communist Parties must support the revolutionary liberation movements in these countries by their deeds. The form the support should take must be discussed with the Communist Party of the country in question, should such a party exist. This obligation to offer active assistance affects – in the first place the workers of those countries on which the backward countries are in a position of colonial or financial dependence.*

*b) An unconditional struggle must be carried out against the reactionary and medieval influence of the clergy, the Christian missions and similar elements. [6]*

So the United Front (UF) was the method of the Bolsheviks and of Comintern of the early 1920s which the Transitional Programme of Trotskyism defended and developed to win the revolutionary leadership of the working class.

The AIUF is its logical extension in the semi-colonies, it recognises the changed circumstances and hence consciousness of the working class and oppressed in the 'third world' and likewise seeks to make a bridge from that consciousness to the revolutionary programme.

By recognising the contradictions between oppressed and oppressor nations, between Imperialist nations and semi-colonial peoples and by recognising the healthy impulse of these masses in fighting the main enemy of all oppressed humanity, imperialist finance capital and its predatory armies and their local stooges and hired thugs, we seek to win their ears for the revolutionary Trotskyist programme.

Stuart King cites N M Roy when he understood the essence of the tactic, despite his wavering and later capitulation;

*"The Fourth Congress caught Roy arguing a communist position and outlining quite clearly the importance of the AIUF":*

*"We have to develop our parties in these countries in order to take the lead in the organisation of the united front against imperialism. Just as the tactics of the united, proletarian front lead to the accumulation of proletarian strength in the Western countries and unmasks and discloses the treachery and compromising tactics of the Social-Democratic Party by bringing them into active conflict, so will the campaign of the united anti-imperialist front in the colonial countries liberate the leadership of the movement from the timid and hesitating bourgeoisie and bring the masses more actively in the forefront, through the most revolutionary social elements, which constitute the basis of the movement, thereby securing the final victory."* [7]

## Trotsky explains the AIUF

Look at how Trotsky explains the AIUF, even if he does not use the term, in these three examples from the late 1930s.

### 1. Against James Maxton of the British Independent Labour Party (1936):

*"Maxton and the others opine that an Italo-Ethiopian war is conflict between two rival dictators. To these politicians it appears that this fact relieves the proletariat of the duty of making a choice between two dictators. They thus define the character of the war by the political form of the state, in the course of which they themselves regard this political form in a quite superficial and purely descriptive manner, without taking into consideration the social foundations of both "dictatorships".*

*A dictator can also play a very progressive role in history. For example: Oliver Cromwell, Robespierre, etc. On the other hand, right in the midst of the English democracy (the Liberal) Lloyd George exercised a highly reactionary dictatorship during the war. Should a dictator place himself at the head of the next uprising of the Indian people in order to smash the British yoke – would Maxton then refuse this dictator his support? Yes or no? If no, why does he refuse his support to the Ethiopian "dictator" who is attempting to ward off the Italian yoke?*

*If Mussolini triumphs, it means the reinforcement of fascism, the strengthening of imperialism and the discouragement of the colonial peoples in Africa and elsewhere. The victory of the Negus however, would mean a mighty blow not only at Italian imperialism but at imperialism as a whole and would lend a powerful impulsion to the rebellious forces of the op-*

**pressed peoples. One must really be completely blind not to see this."** [8]

## 2. Against the Eiffelites on China, 1937

*"In my declaration to the bourgeois press, I said that the duty of all the workers' organizations of China was to participate actively and in the front lines of the present war against Japan, without abandoning, for a single moment, their own program and independent activity. But that is "social patriotism!" the Eiffelites cry. It is capitulation to Chiang Kai-shek! It is the abandonment of the principle of the class struggle! Bolshevism preached revolutionary defeatism in the imperialist war.*

*Now, the war in Spain and the Sino-Japanese War are both imperialist wars. "Our position on the war in China is the same. The only salvation of the workers and peasants of China is to struggle independently against the two armies, against the Chinese army in the same manner as against the Japanese army."*

***These four lines, taken from an Eiffelite document of September 10, 1937, suffice entirely for us to say: we are concerned here with either real traitors or complete imbeciles. But imbecility, raised to this degree, is equal to treason."*** [9]

## 3. And his oft-quoted position on Brazil in 1938:

*"I will take the most simple and obvious example. In Brazil there now reigns a semi fascist regime that every revolutionary can only view with hatred. Let us assume, however, that on the morrow England enters into a military conflict with Brazil. I ask you on whose side of the conflict will the working class be? I will answer for myself personally—in this case I will be on the side of "fascist" Brazil against "democratic" Great Britain.*

*Why? Because in the conflict between them it will not be a question of democracy or fascism. If England should be victorious, she will put another fascist in Rio de Janeiro and will place double chains on Brazil. If Brazil on the contrary should be victorious, it will give a mighty impulse to national and democratic consciousness of the country and will lead to the overthrow of the Vargas dictatorship. The defeat of England will at the same time deliver a blow to British imperialism and will give an impulse to the revolutionary movement of the British proletariat. Truly, one must have an empty head to reduce world antagonisms and military conflicts to the struggle between fascism and democracy. Under all masks one must know how to distinguish exploiters, slave-owners, and robbers!"*

Leon Trotsky, Anti-Imperialist Struggle, is Key to Liberation, An Interview with Mateo Fossa, (September 1938)

Do you not recognise yourselves as James Maxton, the Eiffelites and the centrists here in all this comrades of the ICL, IBT, CoReP and the Cofi? Do you not see how Trotsky scorned this counterposition, in reality a seeking to avoid the defeat of their own bourgeoisie in a predatory war against colonial or semi-colonial countries like Abyssinia, China, Brazil and Libya?

Look at how he finishes each quote (our emphasis), with expressions of scorn and exasperation at those centrists who cannot see what is at stake here, who counterpose the Permanent Revolution to anti-Imperialism, who take a backward workerist, 'class pure independent' position to hide their capitulation to Imperialism itself?

## Equating the AIUF with popular frontism

Everywhere the Spart "Family" equate the AIUF with popular frontism as does the CoReP, "the Anti-Imperialist United Front in Practice is the Popular Front" they say. It is for Stalinists and those centrists who have abandoned the transitional programme and method but not for genuine communists. And this 'orthodoxy' far from inoculating these simon-pure doctrinaires against opportunism is in fact the cover for capitulation to great nation chauvinism under the guise of fighting capitulation to the third world dictators. How about this for doctrinal purity, in reality backward workerism, from the ICL,

*In Third World countries, the pseudo-Trotskyists invoke the "anti-imperialist united front" as a cover for supporting bourgeois regimes. This includes support to the reactionary "Islamic Revolution" of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran in 1979. In the Arab world, both Stalinists and pseudo-Trotskyists hailed the so-called "Arab Revolution" represented in the 1950s by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and in the 1970s by Qaddafi in Libya. Support to Arab nationalism has led to the bloody defeat of workers movements throughout the Near East, not least in Egypt, where Nasser rewarded the Communists for their support by imprisoning, torturing and killing them. The bourgeois-nationalist regimes of Nasser and Qaddafi inevitably failed to address the felt needs of the masses.*

***To the "anti-imperialist united front," we counterpose the Trotskyist programme of permanent revolution, which holds that in the neo-colonial countries, the proletariat must lead all the oppressed masses in a struggle for socialist revolution against their "own" bourgeoisie, as part of an internationalist strategy for proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. [10](our emphasis)***

## The Malvinas, when the asses' ears poked through the orthodox Trotskyist hat

The "Family" all have the same reactionary chauvinist positions on the Malvinas conflict. They all refused to defend semi-colonial Argentina against imperialist Britain because *"The Falkland war (sic!) was an armed conflict between capitalist Argentina and rotten British imperialism. At no point in this war was the national sovereignty of Argentina put into question whereas the overthrow of their respective governments was in the interests of the British and also of the Argentinean working classes. For this reason communists put forward the position of revolutionary defeatism and fight for the defeat of their own bourgeoisie"*



**The Spart Family made a shameful evasion of their proletarian internationalist duty to defend a semi-colony against an imperialist attack; the evasive "capitalist (not semi-colonial) Argentina", etc.**

This is only applicable to inter-imperialist wars, in a war against a semi-colony it amounts to great nation chauvinism.

This is a shameful evasion of your proletarian internationalist duty to defend a semi-colony against an imperialist attack; the evasive "capitalist (not semi-colonial) Argentina", the failure to admit US support for "rotten imperialist Britain" and the transparent cowardly; "at no point in this war was the national sovereignty of Argentina put into question" as if this could excuse a failure to defend this semi-colony against imperialist attack.

And the rational for it all;

*"the overthrow of their respective governments was in the interests of the British and also of the Argentinean working classes",*

is clearly wrong on both counts. Thatcher recovered from a disastrous opinion poll position due to her destruction of British jobs and manufacturing industry to sweep the next election because of it. This ideological victory set her up for her assault on the miners in 1985 and for her anti-union laws and privatisation of public assets. And need we point out the dire political consequence of this for the British and world working class however much imperialism's apologists on the far left might have sought to obfuscate their treachery by trumpeting the secondary gain of the overthrow of Galtieri.

The British working class were left ideologically leaderless by the national chauvinism of Labour leader Michael Foot and the other leaders, Regan/Volker defeated the 1981-82 Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike while the war was going on and embarked on a simultaneous ruthless offensive against the US working class, which set the pattern for the offensive of every capitalist class against their own working class worldwide. All this prepared for imperialism's crowning achievement, the world-historical defeat which the world working class suffered in the overthrow of the Soviet Union. But at least we got rid of Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri Castelli!

The sinking of the Belgrano on May 2 1982 was a victory for world imperialism which the Spart "Family" were unable to oppose politically; the asses' ears of Shachtmanism poked through the orthodox Trotskyist hat. [11]



## Reaction on Immigration Controls

Imperialism causes poor third world workers and peasants who are driven from their homes by starvation and oppression to seek refuge in the rich imperialist countries. This results in the whole Spart family going soft on immigration controls to defend the privileges of the aristocracy of labour. Here is the IBT defending the ICL who are clearly indicating their softness, to say the least, on immigration controls;

*"However, on a sufficiently large scale, immigration flows could wipe out the national identity of the recipient countries. ... Unlimited immigration as a principle is incompatible with the right to national self-determination ...an "open" U.S./Mexico border would not only introduce impoverished Mexican labourers to flood the U.S. labor market, becoming an unprotected pool for capitalist super exploitation, but would also lead to well-financed American "colonists" buying up Mexican enterprises and real estate...If, for example, there were unlimited immigration into Northern Europe, the population influx from the Mediterranean basin would tend to dissolve the national identity of small countries like Holland and Belgium."* (Workers Vanguard, Jan. 18, 1974).[12]

Alan G,

*"I agree with the Spart observation you quote as it is merely a statement of fact. I can categorically state that this does not mean any support for immigration controls by the US, Dutch or Belgian capitalist states. Whether or not this is also true for the Sparts I do not know but, like the IBT, I take no responsibility for the programme of the ICL".* [13]

This line is completely wrong. Whilst the IBT never call for immigration controls they sail so close to the wind here that it becomes similar to the AWL distinction between 'supporting' and 'not opposing' the bombing of Libya.

*"However, on a sufficiently large scale, immigration flows could wipe out the national identity of the recipient countries"*

What is the 'national identity' of Britain or the US? God Save the Queen and Hail to the Chief? How is this a statement of fact? It is a piece of reactionary hogwash designed to appeal to the backward national prejudices of the middle classes and the TU bureaucrats.

*"Unlimited immigration as a principle is incompatible with the right to national self-determination"*

Imperialist countries now have a right to self-determination against immigrants? This is racist to the core.

*"An "open" U.S./Mexico border would not only introduce impoverished Mexican labourers to flood the U.S. labor market, becoming an unprotected pool for capitalist super exploitation, but would also lead to well-financed American "colonists" buying up Mexican enterprises and real estate"*

All the crocodile tears we cry for "unprotected pool for capitalist super exploitation" cannot hide that national chauvinism, US jobs for US workers, is lurking behind this 'concern'. They would not cross the border unless they had good reason to suppose this gave them the chance of a better life. We should demand their legalisation and No Borders! And fear about "well-financed American "colonists" buying up Mexican enterprises and real estate" is also bogus, as if the Rio Grande/Bravo ever stopped them doing that anyway.

*"If, for example, there were unlimited immigration into Northern Europe, the population influx from the Mediterranean basin would tend to dissolve the national identity of small countries like Holland and Belgium."*

The dissolution of these priceless "National Identities" would take the form of shops selling paella, pasta and drinking Sangria and dodgy red wine and sleeping in the afternoons and stuff, we must suppose. What a terrible fate would befall these unfortunate nations. Far better to go for the McDonalds, the Coca Cola and the Big Mac!

## Slander against Lenin on Turkey

The CoReP document fails to understand the UF or the AIUF. It says

*"From this Lenin deduced the necessity of an alliance with the national bourgeoisie: The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, [but should not merge with it, and should under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form]"* [15]

However we look at the word "alliance" here it is clear by the subsequent bracketed clause he is not advocating a capitulation to the nationalist bourgeoisie; he is advocating the AIUF in order to win the working class in the colonies and semi-colonial countries to the cause of the international socialist revolution. But the CoReP and COFI proceeds as if no such distinction exists, we must all act as if the pure class struggle exist everywhere independently of chauvinist workers in imperialist countries and anti-imperialist workers in the oppressed nations. "It just is not right they cannot see it my way and prioritise the defeat of their own weak ruling class and not bother so much about the victory of my own very strong ruling class, who are at least democratic (to us) and civilised compared to your monstrous Saddams and Gadaffis" they moan. In other words the subtleties of Trotsky's distinctions are completely lost on them, and the hoped-for oil revenues that might ease this recession help them to ignore and forget. Here is Trotsky's distinction in 1937, as succinct as ever.

*"The internal regime in the colonial and semi colonial countries has a predominantly bourgeois character. But the pressure of foreign imperialism so alters and distorts the economic and political structure of these countries that the national bourgeoisie (even in the politically independent countries of South America) only partly reaches the height of a ruling class. The pressure of imperi-*



Street demonstration, Petrograd, 18 June 1917. *"In a sense it is wrong to characterise the UF as a tactic at all because it is the methodology of communism, its very mode of existence, its orientation to the global working class as a whole class, the only method that can mobilise that force that alone can overthrow capitalism."*

*alism on backward countries does not, it is true, change their basic social character since the oppressor and oppressed represent only different levels of development in one and the same bourgeois society. Nevertheless the difference between England and India, Japan and China, the United States and Mexico is so big that we strictly differentiate between oppressor and oppressed bourgeois countries and we consider it our duty to support the latter against the former. The bourgeoisie of colonial and semi-colonial countries is a semi-ruling, semi-oppressed class."* (our emphasis) [16]

To press home this misrepresentation the CoReP adopt the old charge of opportunism against Lenin on Turkey,

*"The false character of Lenin's positions was rapidly confirmed in Turkey, where the bourgeois nationalist movement assassinated in 1921 Mustafa Suphi, the delegate to the 1st Congress of the CI, and massacred the entire leadership of the young Communist Party."*

However Lenin was far from capitulatory to Mustafa Kemal,

*"A determined fight is necessary against the attempt to put a communist cloak around revolutionary liberation movements. The C.I. has the duty to support the revolutionary movement in the colonies only for the purpose of gathering of the future proletarian parties in fact and not just in name - in all countries and training them to be their special tasks... of fighting bourgeois democratic tendencies within components communists the backward conscious of against the nation."*

They are hoping we will ignore and forget the situation of Turkey at that time. Whilst it is true that Mustafa Suphi and 14 of his comrades were massacred on the night of 28 January 1921, it is debatable whether they made tactical mistakes in orientation to forces of Mustafa Kemal and it is debatable who killed them, the Kernalists or the supporters of Ismail Enver, the Sultan's war minister. What is not debatable is the correctness of Lenin's and Suphi's support for that Turkish War of Independence and the AIUF that it entailed. Let us not forget Churchill's Gallipoli Campaign between 25 April 1915 and 9 January 1916, during WWI. A joint British and French operation was mounted to capture the Ottoman capital of Constantinople and secure a sea route to Russia. The



campaign was considered one of the greatest victories of the Turks and was reflected on as a major failure by the Allies. The subsequent War of Independence, May 19, 1919 – October 11, July 24, 1923 resulted in a decisive Turkish Victory, the overthrow of the Ottoman Sultanate, the Treaty of Lausanne and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey (Wiki details). Perhaps Lenin and the Comintern should have taken the Allied side there like the CoReP did in Libya?

## The AIUF is the tactics/methodology of the struggle

CoReP goes on to say,

*"If Permanent Revolution supplants the formula 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the farmers,' a fortiori it makes null and void the Anti-Imperialist United Front, since that means an alliance with the bourgeoisie."*

This is totally to misunderstand the theory of Permanent Revolution. It does not now mean that tactics have been replaced by strategy, that no transitional demands and methods are to be employed that we must now revert back to the infantilism so slated by Lenin in his attack on that disorder in 1920. The AIUF is the tactics/methodology of the struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat via Permanent Revolution is the strategic goal of the struggle, is that clear?

But what of the 'Military bloc' tactic, surely it is sufficient to agree to shoot in the same direction as the national army of Libya and so we can be recognised as "on the right side". I fear not, comrades. It is necessary to form an AIUF to defend the state against Imperialist attacks. It is for the people of Libya to deal with their own problems but they will never listen to us unless we are clearly fighting with the regime itself to defeat this assault. We are duty bound to form anti-imperialist alliances in our own countries with those who seek the defeat of their own bourgeoisie, even with those Stalinist and petty-bourgeois forces who defend the third world regimes in Libya and Syria with varying degrees of criticisms from severe to little or none. We cannot hope for written agreements between a tiny revolutionary group in the Imperialist lands and a powerful third world dictator. We speak here of the method of communism in addressing the masses in Libya and everywhere they are under attack.

The entire point surely felt by every serious leftist is that there is something very progressive in the struggles of the masses in the third world, semi-colonial countries against the exploitation of global Imperialism. How do we support that progressive impulse without sowing illusions in the leaderships of bourgeois nationalists like Gaddafi, Assad or Ahmadinejad? Therefore the problem is solved conclude all our 'left communists' (who hide their rightism with this bluster). "The 4th International removes an ambiguity by the 3rd International by adopting the Strategy of Permanent Revolution", the CoReP and COFI think.

They propose (correctly) that Trotsky understood by 1928 that his Theory of Permanent Revolution had universal application, in particular to China

and that both he and Lenin and the early Comintern were mistaken in not understanding and applying the lessons of the Russian Revolution itself to China and universally. This, they think, invalidates the AIUF. But they ignore the fact that Trotsky himself never counterposed the two, the necessity for the AIUF, the practical application of the obligation of communists to support "revolutionary liberation movements in these countries by their deeds", and the theory of Permanent Revolution itself. Of course he did not because the AIUF is a tactic and a method, the means of winning the masses via their political vanguard to the understanding that only the working class, as the only true internationalist class, can lead to the liberation of the semi-colonial countries as part of the world revolution, the Permanent Revolution's strategic goal.

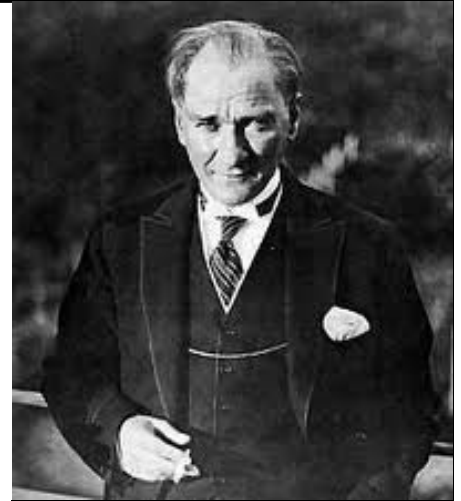
And there is no mystery either in why Trotsky never used the term again after 1927; it is clear that it was used in such an opportunist way by Stalin and later Mao to capitulate to Chiang Kai-shek and bourgeois nationalists in general that to use it would be to appear to identify with their interpretation. The point is what is the politics of the orientation, not its name. Trotsky never repudiated Lenin or the early Comintern on the AIUF; he attacked Stalinist falsifications of their position via the bloc of four classes.

Just like he never equated Stalin's misuse of Lenin's 'Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry', after 1922, with Lenin's pre-1917 use of the same slogan, although both were wrong. Lenin always defended the leading role of the working class as society's leading class changer, whilst on the other hand, Stalinism itself began by implying an equality with the peasantry and in practice accepted, by adaption, to a dominant, better-off petty-bourgeois 'kulak - middle-peasant' to facilitate its bureaucracy to both dominate the proletarian class and Leninist Bolsheviks, as a form of the nationalist bourgeoisie (e.g. in political language - but not, of course in the social nature of the revolutionary state).

And it was not the AIUF that Mao used to justify class collaboration but the Bloc of Four Classes. In fact Mao used the AIUF in quite a progressive way in regard to Chiang Kai-shek, ignoring Stalin's advice to politically capitulate to him, mindful of the appalling consequence of this orientation in the massacre of the Shanghai soviet in 1927. In both orientations the class independence of the working class and the revolutionary party is severely compromised, but Mao allowed himself enough room for manoeuvre to defeat Chiang Kai-shek, had he followed Stalin's advice he would have been wiped out. The CoReP mention this in passing as if it was not the cornerstone of all Trotsky's orientation in tactics and strategy. Trotsky always stressed the importance of maintaining the class independence of the working class and the revolutionary party,

As Stuart King wrote in 1986 Trotsky does not reject the AIUF,

*"We have already pointed out that even after Chiang's first coup against the communists (March 1926) Trotsky called for the maintenance of a*



However Lenin was far from capitulatory to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (above).

*'political bloc' with sections of the KMT. He emphasised, however, that these could not be the "vague and formless" alliances that existed in the KMT, but could be based "only on strictly defined and clearly stated agreements". [17] Again in Summary and Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution written in June 1928 after the Shanghai massacre and the crushing of the proletariat's organisations by the KMT, Trotsky re-affirms the validity of the united front:*

*"It goes without saying that we cannot renounce in advance such rigidly delimited and rigidly practical agreements as serve each time a quite definite aim. For example, such cases as involve agreements with the student youth of the KMT for the organisation of an anti-imperialist demonstration, or of obtaining assistance from Chinese merchants for strikers in a foreign concession, etc... The sole "condition" for every agreement with the bourgeoisie, for each separate, practical, and expedient agreement adapted to each given case, consists in not allowing either the organizations or the banners to become mixed directly or indirectly for a single day or a single hour; it consists in distinguishing between the Red and the Blue, and in not believing for an instant in the capacity or readiness of the bourgeoisie either to lead a genuine struggle against imperialism or not to obstruct the workers and peasants". [18]*

Clearly here Trotsky does not limit the united front only to questions of 'military blocs' against the imperialists or the Warlords. Indeed such a position makes a non-Marxist division between 'politics' and 'war' - "war is the continuation of politics by other means". [19]

Perhaps we should mute our opposition to Imperialism to this military bloc? Perhaps Trotskyists should adopt a lesser AIUF than Osama bin Laden (despite the racism blaming all Americans, "those killers"),

*"A million innocent children are dying at this time as we speak, killed in Iraq without any guilt. We hear no denunciation; we hear no edict from the hereditary rulers. In these days, Israeli tanks rampage across Palestine, in Ramallah, Rafah and Beit Jala and many other parts of the land of Islam [dar*

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**



**Nixon visit, 1972, "In fact Mao used the AIUF in quite a progressive way in regard to Chiang Kai-shek, ignoring Stalin's advice to politically capitulate to him, mindful of the appalling consequence of this orientation in the massacre of the Shanghai soviet in 1927".**

*al-Islam], and we do not hear anyone raising his voice or reacting. But when the sword fell upon America after 80 years, hypocrisy raised its head up high bemoaning those killers who toyed with the blood, honour and sanctities of Muslims."*[20]

## Conclusion: the methodology of communism

We seek to combat the chauvinism that pervades the ranks of the working class in the Imperialist countries by facing them up to their internationalist duty to defend the workers of the semi-colonies against imperialist assault. It is that united front we seek to cultivate, not that of Stalinism and petty-bourgeois nationalists which capitulates to the conjunctural and feigned anti-imperialism of the nationalist bourgeoisie. These may fight Imperialism today to preserve their own privileges by the use of anti-imperialist rhetoric only to sell out again tomorrow if the opportunity arises to enhance their privileges by another alliance with Imperialism. We have made that distinction very clear in the course of this document. In other words we seek to defend the method of the Transitional Programme; the AIUF

is simply the logical extension of the United Front with workers in struggle just as the Comintern saw it in the early 1920s and as Trotsky defended up to his assassination in 1940.

However the United Front in its two manifestations (domestic and in the semi-colonies) is not 'only' a tactic, which may or may not be applied depending on the circumstances, which for some is never now because that involves opposition to current petty-bourgeois prejudices. In that respect the RSO document is vacillating, allowing every concrete instance of a war on a semi-colony to be characterised as an exception depending on the vagaries of 'public opinion', applying to Saddam but not to Gaddafi because the mood of the petty bourgeois had altered in a major collapse since the 2003 mass mobilisation against the war on Iraq. [21]

The UF and AIUF are tactics that apply at all times except when the direct uprising takes place for the seizure of power and the masses are flocking to the revolutionary banner; in a sense it is wrong to characterise the UF as a tactic at all because it is the methodology of communism, its very mode of existence, its orientation to the global working class as a whole class, the only method that can mobilise that force that alone can overthrow capitalism.

## Endnotes

- [1] The anti-imperialist united front: a debate with the GOR, 30/03/1986, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/anti-imperialist-united-front-debate-gor>.
- [2] RSO-Theses on Anti-imperialism 19 May 2007, <http://www.sozialismus.net/content/view/1600/209/>
- [3] CoReP On the Anti-Imperialist United Front July 28, 2006, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/72764757/CoReP-On-the-Anti-Imperialist-United-Front>
- [4] Political Resolution of the Communist Organization for the Fourth International, <http://lrp-cofi.org/PR/polres.html>.
- [5] <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/jul/x01.htm>

[6] <http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/2nd-congress/ch05.htm#v1-p177>

[7] The anti-imperialist united front: a debate with the GOR, 30/03/1986,

[8] Leon Trotsky's Writings on Britain, Volume III, Trotskyism versus Centrism in Britain, The Decline of the ILP (May 1936)

[9] Leon Trotsky, On the Sino-Japanese War, Written: September 23, 1937 <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1937/10/sino.htm>

[10] Workers Vanguard No. 987, 30 September 2011, Reformists Cheer Libyan "Rebels. <http://www.icl-fi.org/english/wv/987/Libya.html>.

[11] Extracted from IDOT No. 1, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/30835498/In-Defence-of-Trot-Sky-ism-No-1>

[12] Workers Vanguard, Jan. 18, 1974

[13] Facebook, [http://www.facebook.com/gerdowning/posts/307728089254991?ref=notif&notif\\_t=like#!/gerdowning](http://www.facebook.com/gerdowning/posts/307728089254991?ref=notif&notif_t=like#!/gerdowning)

[14] <http://www.evangelos12.btinternet.co.uk/immigration.htm>.

[15] Lenin, Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions, for The Second Congress of The Communist International, June 1920.

[16] Leon Trotsky, Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?, Nov 1937, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1937/11/wstate.htm>

[17] The Anti-Imperialist United Front, In defence of the revolutionary Comintern – 1986 Stuart K, <http://www.permanentrevolution.net/entry/592>

[18] The Third International after Lenin, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1928/3rd/ti08.htm>

[19] The anti-imperialist united front: a debate with the GOR

[20] Osama bin Laden, Videotaped Address, October, 2001, <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/481921texts.html>.

[21] RSO-Theses on Anti-imperialism 19 May 2007, <http://www.sozialismus.net/content/view/1600/209/>

### British jobs — from p. 9

for all workers in Britain no matter where they come from. We don't want to go back to the late 1940s and early 1950s when there were reactionary racist notices posted outside factory gates saying, 'No Irish need apply' along with the slogan 'no Irish, no blacks, no dogs' when Irish and black workers were trying to get a place to live. The working class in Britain must not go back to those dark days of prejudice, racism and discrimination against minorities like Irish and Afro-Caribbean.

And if the slogan British jobs for British workers were to gain political currency or be put into practice it would not be long before the capitalists were back again looking for redundancies and attacking wages and conditions. This crisis is not a British crisis but an international crisis. It is this crisis of capitalism internationally and its inability to meet the needs of the working class and sections of the middle class and not foreign and im-

migrant workers that is the cause of the crisis; it is that crisis that drives the capitalist class to attack the workers and their jobs and conditions.

The bottom line for the capitalist class is its profits, privileges, class interests and class control over the working class. All profits are made by exploiting the labour power of the working class internationally and extracting its surplus value.

But when the worker is sacked or made redundant he no longer creates value and is condemned to a life of unemployment and poverty. Until capitalism is defeated by the working class and socialism is created there is no guarantee for the jobs for the working class in Britain and internationally. The natural allies of the working class in Britain are the working class internationally, while the sworn enemy of the working class in Britain are the capitalist class in Britain and internationally. Workers of the world unite all you've got to lose

are your chains that tie you hand and foot to capitalism

Remember during the miners' strike in Britain the miners got support from the world working class, it was these workers who gave financial support and showed solidarity with the miners. Unlike the dockers and steel workers in Scotland who stood aside from the struggle and did separate deals with Thatcher and the Tories, as did the Nottingham miners; they all lost their jobs in the end.

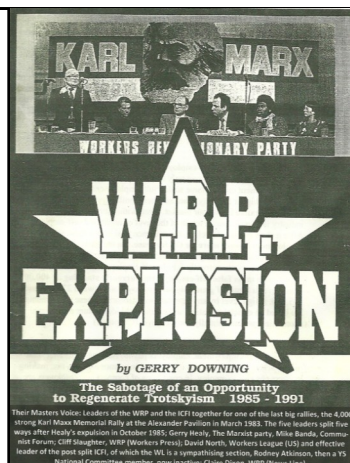
Remember also the Liverpool dockers in their struggle in the 1990s to defend their jobs and conditions refused to allow the TGWU as was led by Bill Morris to control the dispute because they feared that the T&G bureaucracy would sell it out. Rather they turned to the international working class for solidarity and support and they got it in spades. Foreign workers are the only allies the working class in Britain can rely on.



## The Press of the Socialist Fight Group and its international politically linked organisations



**Forthcoming**  
This 1991 publication will be back in print shortly in book form, 192 pages. I still defend all the main political conclusions and characterisations of the WRP and all other political groups made in the work. Price £12, £15 Prepublication orders to our box number



## Where We Stand – Socialist Fight EB

1. We stand With Karl Marx: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the working class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule' (The International Workingmen's Association 1864, General Rules).
2. The capitalist state consists, in the last analysis, of ruling-class laws within a judicial system and detention centres overseen by the armed bodies of police/army who are under the direction and are controlled in acts of defence of capitalist property rights against the interests of the majority of civil society. The working class must overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a workers' state based on democratic soviets/workers' councils to suppress the inevitable counter-revolution of private capitalist against planned production for the satisfaction of socialised human need.
3. We recognise the necessity for revolutionaries to carry out serious ideological and political struggle as direct participants in the trade unions (always) and in the mass reformist social democratic bourgeois workers' parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. Because we see the trade union bureaucracy and their allies in the Labour party leadership as the most fundamental obstacle to the struggle for power of the working class, outside of

the state forces and their direct agencies themselves, we must fight and defeat and replace them with a revolutionary leadership by mobilising the base against the pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleaders to open the way forward for the struggle for workers' power.

4. We are full in support of all mass mobilisations against the onslaught of this reactionary Con-Lib Dem coalition. However, whilst participating in this struggle we will oppose all policies which subordinate the working class to the political agenda of the petty-bourgeois reformist leaders of the Labour party and trade unions.

5. We recognise that class society, and capitalism as the last form of class society, is by its nature patriarchal. In that sense the oppression of women is different from all other forms of oppression and discrimination. Because this social oppression is inextricably tied to private property and its inheritance to achieve full sexual, social and economic freedom and equality for all we need to overthrow class society itself.

6. We fight racism and fascism. We support the right of people to fight back against racist and fascist attacks by any means necessary. Self-defence is no offence! We support 'No Platform' for all fascists but never call on the capitalist state to ban fascist marches or parties; these laws would inevitably primarily be used against workers' organisations, as history has shown.

**7. We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and**

Imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Workers have the right to sell their labour internationally wherever they get the best price. Only union membership and pay rates can counter employers who seek to exploit immigrant workers as cheap labour to undermine the gains of past struggles.

**Socialist Fight is in the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International with the Liga Comunista of Brazil and the Tendencia Militante Bolchevique of Argentina. It is produced by the following Editorial Board:**

**Gerry Downing, Ray Rising, Charlie Walsh, Carol Foster  
and Aggie McCallum.**

**Subscribe to Socialist Fight and IDOT**

**Four Issues: UK: £12.00, EU: £14.00**

**Rest of the World: £18.00**

**Send donations to help in their production**

**Cheques and Standing Orders to**

**Socialist Fight Account No. 1.**

**Unity Trust Bank, Sort Code**

**08-60-01, Account. No. 20227368.**

**PO Box 59188, London, NW2 9LJ**

**Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!**